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The Audsleys, the Blackies and The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist

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“THE AUDSLEYS, THE BLACKIES, AND *THE PRACTICAL DECORATOR AND
ORNAMENTIST*”

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in Art History at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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Abstract

THE AUDSLEYS, THE BLACKIES, AND *THE PRACTICAL DECORATOR AND ORNAMENTIST*

By Gay Petalio Acompañado, B.A.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Art at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2010.

Major Director: Dr. Charles Brownell, Professor of Art History, Department of Art History

The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist (Glasgow, 1892), one of the jewels in James Branch Cabell Library, embodies the work of the distinguished British designers George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice A. Audsley; the eminent Scottish publishing firm of Blackie & Son; and the illustrious French printing house of Didot. The thesis argues that the *Decorator* is one of the great nineteenth-century design books.

Chapter one focuses on G. A. Audsley's five masterworks and illustrates the contributions of a distinguished family of architects. There has not been a study of the Audsley in ten years, and the present study goes further than other scholars in giving the Audsleys proper credit. Chapter two examines the Blackies, summarizing for the first time their patronage of Alexander Thomson, Talwin Morris, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Chapter three is the first close analysis of the book, tying it to A. W. N. Pugin, Owen Jones and Christopher Dresser, and opening the question of its international impact to the present.

Introduction

This thesis focuses on the book *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Fig.1) (Glasgow, 1892), one of the jewels in Special Collections and Archives at James Branch Cabell Library. This publication embodies the work of three significant families. The volume was written by the distinguished British designers George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice A. Audsley; it was published by the eminent Scottish firm of Blackie & Son; and it was exquisitely chromolithographed by the illustrious French house of Didot. The present thesis argues that *The Practical Decorator* is a significant work of art on the basis of the authors' careers as architects, designers, ornamentists, and writers; on the basis of the involvement of the Blackies, who were major publishers and devoted patrons of the art; and on the basis of this book's practicality and the quality of the Audsley-Didot plates.

Chapter one looks at the authors, the Audsleys, focusing on G. A. Audsley's five masterworks and illustrating a distinguished family of architects and their contributions to design. There has not been a study of the Audsley in ten years, and the present study goes further than any other scholars in giving the Audsleys proper credit. Chapter two examines the publishers, the Blackies, revealing for the first time their major patronage of the art in connection with three major British design leaders, Alexander Thomson, Talwin Morris, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Chapter three is the first close examination of the book. This chapter makes a case for its practicality; analyzes this work as a

refinement of the Audsleys' two previous books on ornament; ties the Audsleys to three major design reformers, A. W. N. Pugin, Owen Jones, and Christopher Dresser; evaluates the book's beautiful illustrations; and opens the question of its international impact to the present.

Chapter 1: The Authors: George Ashdown Audsley, (1838-1925) and Maurice A. Audsley, (1865-1957)

The Audsleys were a distinguished family of nineteenth-century architects and designers who worked in both Britain and the United States. George Audsley (Fig. 2), the head of the family and the most famous of all the Audsleys, began his career as an architect and then worked as a designer during the Victorian period. He became a prolific author, who published books on secular and religious architecture, decoration, illuminated manuscripts, women's apparel, Japanese art, color printing, ornament and craftsmanship. Let us begin with a look at G. A. Audsley pursuing his multiple careers through his five masterworks, and second, a look at his son Maurice A. Audsley.

George Ashdown Audsley and Masterworks

Born in Elgin, Scotland, in the 1830s, George Ashdown Audsley¹ belongs to the same generation of reformers such as William Morris (1834-1896), Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898), Christopher Dresser (1834-1904), and J. Moyr Smith (1839-1912). George was the youngest of three children of a small Scottish working class family. He elevated

¹ For George Audsley's biography, see an unpublished manuscript by David H. Fox, "George Ashdown Audsley" (David Fox, 1995) Hosted by The Friends of the Wanamaker Organ, Inc., in <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/audsley.php> and PDF file of George Audsley's biography in <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/08/pdf/audsley.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2010). For a published source on George Audsley's biography, see David Van Zanten, "George Ashdown Audsley and the Layton Art Gallery," *Alexander Greek Thomson Newsletter* No. 27 (Sep. 2000): 10-12. Also, see T. Scott Buhrman "George Ashdown Audsley. LL.D.: An Appreciation" in the posthumous publication, George Ashdown Audsley, *The Temple of Tone: A Disquisition on the Scientific and Artistic Tonal Appointment and Control of Concert-Room, Church, and Theater Organs, According to the Advanced System of Compound Tonal Flexibility and Expression with Complete Specifications* (1925, reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1965), 245-260.

the ranks along with his older brother, William James Audsley, to become an accomplished architect, author and designer.

During his formative years in the 1850s, George Audsley started his architectural career apprenticed to the local firm of A. and W. Reid in his hometown of Elgin.² In 1856 at the age of eighteen, he moved to Liverpool, England where he joined his brother, William, also working as an architect. George was associated with two of Liverpool's renowned architects, John Weightman and John Cunningham.³ For five years, he worked under John Weightman, a Liverpool surveyor, who oversaw municipal building projects. At the time, Weightman's major construction project was the building of the Neo-classical Liverpool Free Library and Museum.⁴ Subsequently after five years with Weightman, George partnered for one year with John Cunningham, who was famous for designing Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall.⁵ In the 1860s, an aspiring architect received formal training by way of apprenticeship and recommendation in order to enter the profession. Eventually, in 1860, the Royal Institute of British Architects initiated a proposal to regulate the certification of architects through examination. In fact, George Audsley wrote a letter to the Liverpool Architectural Society protesting the examination on behalf of students and associates.⁶ After much debate, the letter was withdrawn and the proposal was adopted.

With his brother William present in Liverpool, the two brothers eventually joined together and set up the firm, W. & G. Audsley, architects, first appearing in Liverpool

² David H. Fox, 'George Ashdown Audsley, Architect' "George Ashdown Audsley" (David Fox, 1995), 14 <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/08/pdf/audsley.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2010).

³ Fox, 'George,' 14.

⁴ Fox, 'George,' 14 -15.

⁵ Fox, 'George,' 15.

⁶ Fox, 'George,' 16.

directories in 1863.⁷ The brothers maintained their architectural practice in Liverpool from the early 1860s to the early 1880s until their relocation to London. David Fox, a recent biographer of George Audsley, sums up the relationship of the brothers:

Very little is known about the activities of William within this firm. He is not known to have published any books or presented papers on his own. It would seem that G. A. Audsley, perhaps being the better speaker and writer, handled relations with clients. In the artistic aspect, matters are even less clear. No drawings exclusively by William are known to exist, nor any writings hinting at his design contributions. Given G. A. Audsley's intolerance of unworthy work, one might suppose that William was a competent architect, but one who preferred the "back office." The fraternal relationship of the brothers might be illustrated by their occupation of adjoining dwellings...in Liverpool.⁸

Together they designed places of worship for a variety of congregations, and private houses in England. For instance, the Audsleys designed for Presbyterian, Jewish and Anglican congregations, proving the adaptability of their designs for a variety of styles and uses.⁹

The Audsleys predominantly used the Neo-Classical style of Alexander Thomson for secular buildings, Gothic style for Christian churches and eclectic elements for Jewish synagogues. In 1876, both William and George were elected as Fellows to the Royal Institute of British Architects, a status that lasted until they moved to the United States.¹⁰ In

The Popular Dictionary of Architecture and the Allied Arts, a book published by the Audsley brothers in 1879, the brothers outlined the role of an architect:

The ordinary duties of the modern architect are, firstly, to receive the instructions of his employer relative to the contemplated work, and to

⁷ Fox, 'George,' 15.

⁸ Fox, 'George,' 15-16.

⁹ I am indebted to David Moffat, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts, and Alyson Pollard, Curator of Metalwork and Glass, at Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, U.K. for providing me with compiled survey report and a list of works by George Ashdown and William James Audsley prepared for the exhibit, *The Audsleys: Masters of Victorian Design* May 27- September 7, 2003.

¹⁰ Fox, 'George,' 16.

transfer these instructions to designs which shall display artistic feeling and beauty both in proportion and ornamentation; convenience and fitness in arrangement of the several apartments and offices, with a view to comfort and health; and true economy and scientific knowledge in the employment, dimensions, and disposition of all the building materials.... Secondly, to prepare a full description or specification of the modes in which all portions of the work to be executed by the several trades: ... he must show a comprehensive knowledge of all the building trades, and the different qualities of the materials used, and the several modes of manipulating them. Thirdly, he has to superintend the construction of the building by carefully inspecting...during its progress from the laying of the foundation to the cleaning down of the finished structure, And lastly, to check and pass all the builder's accounts; adjudging the amounts which have to be paid for any works executed over and above those undertaken to be executed by the original and accepted contract. That all these duties may be satisfactorily and perfectly executed, it is obvious the architect must be a true artist, a skillful draughtsman, a mathematician, a person endowed with considerable scientific knowledge, a mechanician, an arithmetician, a man of probity, and a gentleman.¹¹

In his early career as an architect working in Liverpool, G. A. Audsley proved that he could mediate between two opposing theories. He was a disseminator of the South Kensington design reform theories of Owen Jones and Christopher Dresser and a follower of John Ruskin (1819-1900), an influential architectural theorist and critic. This is exemplified in one of the Audsleys major commissions in Liverpool, the Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue, which survives with its impressive interior.

Architecture: Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue (1874), Princes Road, Liverpool

The best preserved place of worship in Liverpool designed by the Audsleys is the Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue (Fig.3), finished in 1874 and designed for a

¹¹ William James Audsley and George Ashdown Audsley, Vol. 2, *The Popular Dictionary of Architecture and the Allied Arts: A Work of Reference for the Architect, Builder, Sculptor, Decorative Artist, and General Student with Numerous Illustrations from all Styles of Architecture, from the Egyptian to the Renaissance* (London: H. Sotheran, 1879), 82-83.

wealthy Jewish congregation. The synagogue cost £10,000 to build. The Audsleys, who had no prior experience building synagogues, won the competition against other Jewish architects, who had experience in building synagogues.¹² The Audsleys must have dug into research. It was probably hard for nineteenth century architects to envision buildings suited to Jewish tradition because they had scant information on ancient Jewish architecture. The brothers came up with an eclectic design different from their usual Gothic design for Christian congregations. They mixed elements from a variety of sources such as Islamic or Moorish, Gothic and Classical architecture. Leaning more towards a Moorish revival, the synagogue originally looked more Moorish in style particularly with the minarets, which were deemed unsafe in the 1960s.¹³ By the 1870s, Moorish revival spread from Germany, and it was used commonly for synagogues.¹⁴ The architects' description of the synagogue is reprinted in the pamphlet for the *Order of the Jubilee Service Commemorative of the Consecration of the Synagogue* [held on] *September 21st 1924*:

The style of architecture in which it is designed is too eclectic to be designated by any one name: its features being selected from both Eastern and Western Schools of Art, and blended together with enough of the eastern feeling to render it suggestive, and enough of the western severity....The plan of the synagogue is a parallelogram, 90 feet long by 56 feet wide, with ...[a sanctuary] eastward, and a large commodious vestibule at the west end. The body or nave of the building is 26 feet wide by 48 feet high to the vaulted roof; and opens into the aisles through lofty

¹² I am thankful to the late Dr. Cecil Moss for giving me a tour of the interior and for telling me how the Audsleys obtained the commission during my visit to Liverpool on June 2006.

¹³ Edward Jamilly, "'All Manner of Workmanship': Interior Decoration in British Synagogues," Sharman Kadish, ed. *Building Jerusalem: Jewish Architecture in Britain* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1996), 201.

¹⁴ Walker Art Gallery, *The Audsleys: Masters of Victorian Design*, exhibition pamphlet (Liverpool: Walker Art Gallery, 2003).

and finely-proportioned arches, supported on tapered octagonal columns, with spreading capitals of foliage.¹⁵

Covered mainly in red brick, the present exterior (Fig. 4) of the building contains some decorative elements in red sandstone embellishing the arches, cornices, and turrets. The absence of the minarets changes the total effect from a Moorish to a Romanesque exterior. The main entrance is situated on the western end. A large doorway opens to a dim entrance hall that is as wide as the building itself. On either side there is a staircase leading up to the ladies' galleries in the main part of the synagogue. Then, one bursts into a sumptuous interior (Fig. 5). The Audsleys designed the whole interior as a unified work of art. It is stunning with the central hall flanked by octagonal cast iron columns supporting the arches, and filled with richly stenciled designs of anthemias and floral motifs of gold, yellow, red, green and blue that seemed to unite and complement each other. The flatness of these motifs adheres to the ideas of the thinkers called the South Kensington design reform group led by Owen Jones and Christopher Dresser. These reformers argued for flat decoration on flat surfaces.¹⁶ Ruskin, on the other hand, favored Gothic's naturalism:

¹⁵ "Architect's Description of Princes Road Synagogue, 1874," *The Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation. Princes Road Synagogue: Order of the Jubilee Service Commemorative of the Consecration of the Synagogue September 3rd 1874, Sunday, September 21st 1924* (Liverpool: The Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation, 1924), 17.

¹⁶ See Owen Jones' "Proposition 13: Flowers or other natural objects should not be used as ornaments, but conventional representations founded upon them sufficiently suggestive to convey the intended image to the mind, without destroying the unity of the object they are employed to decorate," in *Grammar of Ornament, Illustrated by Examples from Various Styles of Ornament* (1856; reprint, London: B. Quaritch, 1910), 5. This is echoed by Christopher Dresser stating, "flatness is an almost invariable characteristic of walls, and it is a welcome feature both of a wall and of a ceiling also; our decorations of these surfaces must therefore be flat, for it is our duty, as well as our privilege, to express truth." in chapter 9 "On Truthfulness of Expression in Ornamentation" *Studies in Design*, (1874, reprint, Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 2002), 17.

The third constituent element of the Gothic mind was stated to be Naturalism; that is to say, the love of natural objects for their own sake, and the effort to represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistical laws....For, so soon as the workman is left free to represent what subjects he chooses, he must look to nature that is round him for material, and will endeavor to represent it as he sees it, with more or less accuracy according to the skill he possesses, and with much play of fancy, but with small respect for law.¹⁷

At the center of the nave, sits a platform called the Bimah, where the Torah, the Jewish sacred text is read. The varied capitals of the colonnades supporting the Bimah (Fig. 6) and the Arks' domes (Fig. 7) reflect one of Ruskin's principles. In Ruskin's most influential work, *The Stones of Venice*, published in three volumes in 1851-1853, Ruskin commended the irregularity of medieval craftsmen's work in his most influential chapter on *The Nature of Gothic*:

It requires a strong effort of common sense to shake ourselves quit of all that we have been taught for the last two centuries, and wake to the perception of a truth just as simple and certain as it is new, the great art, whether expressing itself in words, colours, or stones, does not say the same thing over and over again....

Let us then understand at once that change or variety is as much a necessity to the human heart and brain in buildings as in books; that there is no merit,...and that we must no more expect to derive either pleasure or profit from architecture whose ornaments are of one pattern, and whose pillars are of one proportion, than we should out of a universe in which the clouds were all of one shape, and the trees all of one size.¹⁸

As followers of Ruskin, the Audsleys reiterated Ruskin's principle above while expressing their attitude towards architecture in *Cottage, Lodge and Villa Architecture*, first published in 1868:

¹⁷ John Ruskin, "The Nature of Gothic" *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 2 (1851-1853, reprint, New York: P. F. Collier, 1900), 181.

¹⁸ Ruskin, "Nature," 174-175.

...great art, whether expressing itself in words, colours, or stones, does not say the same thing over and over; that the merit of architectural, as of every other art, consists in its saying new and different things; that to repeat itself is no more a characteristic of genius in marble than it is of genius in print; and that we may, without offending any laws of good taste, require of an architect, as we do of a novelist, that he should be not only correct, but entertaining.¹⁹

The Audsleys adhered to Ruskin to a point, but they also deviated. For instance, the Audsleys embraced industrial technology employing cast iron supports, which Ruskin condemned preferring the use of solid and durable materials such as stone and brick.

The Audsleys designed almost everything in the synagogue's interior including a pair of chairs and the stained glass windows. On the concave sides of the Bimah facing the Ark of the Covenant sits a pair of robust cylindrical chairs (Fig.8) designed by the Audsleys. Cylindrical chairs are a favorite of avant-garde designers in this period and the Arts & Crafts movement.²⁰ The most notable example is E. W. Godwin's design for the Northampton Town Hall Council chamber (Fig.9) of an 1865 Councillor's chair (Fig.10) with a curved back held with rounded vertical supports.²¹ The Audsleys' cylindrical chairs are specifically designed to be embraced by the concave corners on each side of the podium.

¹⁹ Quoted by architectural historian and researcher, David M. Breiner, who illustrates the Audsleys adherence to Ruskin's principle in "Bowling Green Offices Building" (Report, Landmarks Preservation Commission September 19, 1995, Designation List 266 LP-1927), 2. For the quotation, see William Audsley and George Audsley, *Cottage, Lodge, and Villa Architecture* (London: William Mackenzie, 1872), 8-9.

²⁰ Susan Hume Frazer studied the development and evolution of the cylindrical chairs from antiquity to Charles Rennie Mackintosh's desk chair for the Willow Tea Room and Frank Lloyd Wright's barrel chair for Darwin D. Martin in "Cylindrical Chairs: A Study of their Origins" (paper presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for ARH 789, Department of Art History, Virginia Commonwealth University, April 29, 1997).

²¹ Susan Weber Soros, *The Secular Furniture of E.W. Godwin with Catalogue Raisonné* (New York: Yale University Press, 1999), 80-81.

Moving further down the nave, there are marble steps leading to the Ark with the lower portion made of a variety of colored marbles and the upper portion consisting of Caen stone. Five domes (Fig.11) painted in blue with gold lead stars finish the top of the Ark producing a glorious effect. The most magnificent stained glass windows in this building are the rose windows in the west and east walls. With a view of the rose window on the east side (Fig.12), it is hard to count how many different colors were used. According to a published description of 1908 *Shoppel's Owners and Builders Magazine*, to insure correct color “no fewer than two hundred and thirty seven [colors] were ... employed, [which] neutralised the effects of light and shade and produced a perfect balance of colour.”²² The Audsleys knew how to create an astonishing space. Their creative use of harmonious colors in the interior decorations produces a magnificent work of art.

Publication: *Keramic Art of Japan, 1875*

Next door to the right of the synagogue is a High Victorian Gothic house, Streatlam Towers (Fig. 13), completed in 1872. The Audsleys designed the building for the merchant and collector of Japanese art, James Lord Bowes, who opened his house as a museum.²³ This red brick building decorated with red sandstone shows the initials JLB on the exterior side of the house. George Audsley's friendship with Lord Bowes resulted in a magnificent publication that illustrated connection between East and West and

²² Quoted by the Walker Art Gallery from *Shoppel's Owners and Builders Magazine* (May 1908) Vol. II No.5., 8 in their compiled and unpublished information on The Old Hebrew Synagogue – Prince's Rd., Toxteth as part of “The Audsleys: Works, Part 1 – Buildings in Liverpool and Vicinity,” *The Audsleys: Masters of Victorian Design*.

²³ Walker Art Gallery, exhibition pamphlet, n.p.

supported the spread of Japonism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Japonism was a direct result when Commodore Matthew Perry opened Japan to trade with the West in the 1850s. The term describes the Western craze for Japanese goods and the influence of Japanese aesthetic on Western culture. Many avant-garde artists and designers, who subscribed to Japonism, were deeply influenced by it, thus resulting in a profound impact on western art and design.

While practicing as an architect and designer, George Audsley published on a variety of topics. He collaborated with his brother W.J. Audsley, on eleven books; with his Liverpool friend and client, James Lord Bowes, on two books about Japanese art; and with his sons, Maurice and Berthold Audsley²⁴ on ornament and crafts. Most of all, he was an influential figure in publishing on Japanese art and on ornament. For instance, his friendship and collaboration with Bowes resulted in the publication of *Keramic Art of Japan* (Fig. 14) first published in 1875 and a reprint appearing in 1881.²⁵ A more recent pocket-book sized unabridged facsimile based on the 1881 edition was accurately reproduced as part of the Elibron Classics Series by Adamant Media Corporation in 2005. The Audsleys relied on Firmin-Didot for the chromolithographic printing of this publication. In their preface, the Audsleys acknowledges Firmin-Didot's services.

Here we gratefully acknowledge the services of M. [Auguste] Racinet, [a French equivalent of Owen Jones and the author of Polychrome Ornament] under whose careful personal supervision the coloured plates

²⁴ See David H. Fox, 'The Writings of George Ashdown Audsley on Art and Architecture,' "George Ashdown Audsley" (David Fox, 1995), 120-121 <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/08/pdf/audsley.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2010)

²⁵ Copies of both the 1875 and 1881 edition of *Keramic Art of Japan* are available in Virginia Museum of Fine Arts library. Lee Viverette, VMFA's reference librarian kindly called my attention first to the 1881 edition.

*have been produced in the art-printing establishment of MM. Firmin-Didot et Cie, of Paris.*²⁶

Within this book, there are groupings of ceramics produced in different provinces of Japan. For instance, Pl. 14 (Fig.15) includes a display of six basins from Hizen province. The four basins on the top were in the possession of A. W. Franks, Esq., F.S.A²⁷ and the bottom two basins were in the possession of Bowes.²⁸ The top left basin (Fig.16) repays attention. The description says that the basin is of “fine old Arita porcelain, very tastefully painted with sprays of *ume* and flowers. In the centre is a *kiku* [or chrysanthemum] of many petals.”²⁹ This particular pattern lets us see one way that Japanese inspiration affected the West. This pattern was copied by one of the greatest of all the English ceramic firms, Minton’s China Works, with a slightly simplified derivative of an unknown pattern (Fig.17), manufactured as early as 1884.³⁰

Architecture: Layton Art Gallery, 1885-1888

From Liverpool, George moved to London in the early 1880s while William moved to the United States in 1885 still maintaining the partnership’s work. After a chance encounter in the early 1880s on board a ship while crossing the Atlantic on route to England, Frederick R. Layton (Fig.18), a businessman and an art collector,

²⁶ George A. Audsley and James L. Bowes, “Preface” *Keramic Art of Japan* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1881), ix.

²⁷ George A. Audsley and James Lord Bowes. *Keramic Art of Japan* 2 Vols. (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1875; reprint, Boston: Adamant Media Corp., 2005), 159.

²⁸ Audsley and Bowes, *Keramic*, 160

²⁹ Audsley and Bowes, *Keramic*, 159.

³⁰ I am grateful to Stephen McMaster for recognizing the match between the Minton version and *Keramic Art of Japan*.

commissioned G. A. Audsley to design a public museum, Layton Art Gallery.³¹ Begun in 1885 in Milwaukee, The Layton Art Gallery (Fig.19-20) was built by the local architect E.T. Mix without direct supervision from the Audsleys.³² Despite the lack of supervision, the plan was executed accurately. Unfortunately, this building was demolished in 1957. The scholar David Van Zanten describes the style and proves the Audsleys' adherence to the manner of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, Glasgow's first internationally known architect, who mastered the Greek style.

The Layton Gallery....was mysterious as well as monumental....The pillars themselves were ornamented with...ancient Greek designs, archaic in their flat carving, exotic in their originality, and highly refined in their calculated curves and countercurves....The Layton Gallery's architecture was...the reproduction of the neo-Greek style invented by the Scottish architect Alexander 'Greek' Thomson,...[it was] a powerful rendition of that vocabulary, producing ... the most sophisticated designs carried out in the Midwest before 1890.³³

The Layton Art Gallery marked the first migration of the Thomson manner into the United States. Van Zanten adds that George Audsley "regarded the Layton Gallery as his favourite architectural work."³⁴ Commenting on the effect of Layton Gallery, Van Zanten compares it to other designed buildings in the Midwest:

It was one of the most powerful and unified works of architecture to be erected in the Midwest before the emergence of Louis Sullivan's mature work with the Wainwright Building, completed in St. Louis in 1891. In its light colouring, compressed mass, and exotically styled classical imagery,

³¹ Based on Frederick Layton's inaugural remarks reproduced in the inaugural publication, *Opening of the Layton Art Gallery* (1888), 10-11, and the account recorded in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* on April 6, 1888, David Van Zanten retells the story of the encounter that led to the Audsley commission in "George Ashdown Audsley and the Layton Art Gallery," *Alexander Greek Thomson Newsletter* No. 27 (Sep. 2000):8. Also see David Van Zanten, "The Architecture of the Layton Art Gallery," *1888: Frederick Layton and His World* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Milwaukee Museum of Art, 1988), 242.

³² Van Zanten, "George": 10.

³³ Van Zanten, "George": 8.

³⁴ Van Zanten, "George": 12. Also cited by Buhrman, *Temple of Tone* (note 13), 249.

the Layton Gallery distinguished itself decisively from a series of museums erected contemporaneously in other major cities of the Midwest.³⁵

George Audsley designed a commanding structure fit for Layton's art collection, which were presented to the city of Milwaukee along with the structure. Thomson's style traveled across the Atlantic and survives in United States through the Audsleys.

G. A. Audsley and his family followed his brother and migrated to the U.S. in 1892. In the U.S., George designed churches, houses and public buildings until the early 1900s. His arrival resulted in the permanent link between Europe and the U.S. through the Bowling Green Office building. Written for the 1988 publication and exhibition, *1888: Frederick Layton and His World* for Milwaukee Art Gallery, an essay titled "The architecture of Layton Art Gallery," the early version of Van Zanten's 2000 Thomson Newsletter article, mentions the move. Van Zanten strongly believes the move was likely prompted in association with the building of the Bowling Green Office.

Their [1892] move [to New York] may have been connected with their most extraordinary work there, the Bowling Green Building at 5-11 Broadway It was built by English investors and one might speculate (sic) that they had sent the Audsleys out as their agents.³⁶

Architecture: Bowling Green Office Building, 1895-1898

A standing survivor with an expressed verticality, the Bowling Green Offices (Fig.21) on 5-11 Broadway, was a sixteen-story steel framed skyscraper built in 1895-1898 and designed by W. & G. Audsley in New York. The structure "consisted of a steel

³⁵ Van Zanten, "George": 12.

³⁶ Van Zanten mentions about the Ausleys move to New York in "The Architecture of the Layton Art Gallery," *1888: Frederick Layton and His World* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Milwaukee Museum of Art, 1988), 244.

frame clad in Maine granite, white brick, and terra cotta.”³⁷ Commissioned by the Broadway Realty Company with an estimated cost of \$1.8 million, the building served as business offices.³⁸ Today, the Bowling Green building still serves the same purpose. In the 1920s, two small additions were executed by the firm of William Ludlow and Charles Peabody, who added a seventeenth floor and a four-story tower, which harmonized with the original design.³⁹ The interior had been altered many times, but the exterior of the original building remains untouched.

Similar to the style at Layton Gallery, the “Greek” Thomson idiom appears through the Conkling-Armstrong manufactured terra cotta⁴⁰ (Figs.22-23) surface details of infinite bands of honeysuckle or anthemias running on the lower part on both the entrances and the frieze (Fig. 24). The variety of bands of anthemias in the exterior of the Bowling Green building are slight variations of the designs from Plates 18, 95 and 96 design (Figs.25-27) from the *Practical Decorator*. The same Thomson style is seen in the door treatment (Fig.28) with tapering or battered sides decorated with rosettes and capped with anthemias. Bowling Green Office Building looks back to a Thomson source, Queen’s Park Church (Fig. 29). And the same Thomson style is seen in the presence of the imaginative orders such as the dwarf columns (Fig. 30) similar to those in Thomson’s Egyptian Hall in Glasgow, Scotland (Fig.31).

³⁷ Breiner, “Bowling,” 3.

³⁸ David M. Breiner, “Bowling Green Offices Building” (Report, Landmarks Preservation Commission September 19, 1995, Designation List 266 LP-1927), 1.

³⁹ Breiner, “Bowling,” 4.

⁴⁰ Breiner cites the terra cotta manufactured for the exterior was done by the Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Company in “Bowling,” 4. In fact, I have found William & George Audsley’s designs for the terra cotta exterior of the Bowling Green Office building from the Philadelphia-based terra cotta company in Pl. 19 and 20 in Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Co., Philadelphia. *Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Company 1898 Catalogue* (Philadelphia: Conkling-Armstrong, 1898).

The organization of the skyscraper from top to bottom did not come from the United Kingdom, though. A Classical American three-part skyscraper pattern based on the Orders is seen with a colonnade or arcade at the bottom, a shaft and a colonnade or arcade at the top. This tripartite pattern for commercial buildings developed along with the advancements in technology.⁴¹ In the 1840s, the four-story commercial structures were modeled from the Renaissance Italian palazzo formula, which eventually evolved into taller skyscrapers.⁴² Winston Weisman, a noted scholar on the history of skyscraper, characterized the late 1880s skyscrapers with the wide spread use of the tripartite system.⁴³

Following the tripartite structure, the Bowling Green building consists of: a base of colonnades spanning two decorated stories, a transitional story with imaginative dwarf columns and thick cornices, a vertical shaft of ten bricked stories, another transitional story with thick cornices prior to the capital, and the capital with colonnades stretching into two decorated stories. Sarah Landau and Carl Condit describe George Audsley's treatment of the Bowling Green Office building's exterior in relation to Louis Sullivan:

G. A. Audsley ... adhered to Sullivan's aesthetic ideals. Quoting at some length from Sullivan's "The Tall Building Artistically Considered" in an article of the design of tall office buildings, Audsley emphasized the importance of considering the points of view from which such a building

⁴¹ Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit discuss the advances in technology that led to the development of skyscrapers, "Technological Preparations" *Rise of the New York Skyscraper 1865-1913* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 19-39.

⁴² Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit agrees with Winston Weisman that the Italian palazzo was an inspiration leading up to the tripartite skyscraper pattern in "Toward the Skyscraper: Architectural and Technical Achievement in New York Before 1870," *Rise of the New York Skyscraper 1865-1913* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 43. Landau and Condit cites Winston Weisman in "Commercial Palaces of New York, 1845- 1875," *Art Bulletin* 36 (December 1954), 285.

⁴³ Winston Weisman has proposed seven phases on the evolution of the skyscraper form in "A New View of Skyscraper History," ch. 3 of *The Rise of an American Architecture* Edgar Kauffman Jr., ed (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1970), 119.

would be seen as well as the proportion of its height to the width of the street. He stressed the need to “judiciously” and “sparingly” apply ornament to the structural features. Further, he criticized the fashion for treating the lower division as “simply a base or pedestal to the upper stories,” especially when realized in “intensely vulgar, rock-faced, cyclopean masonry,” maintaining that this section of the building should be “refined and beautiful” and treated “in perfect accord with the main lines and general vertical feeling of the design.” Moreover, Audsley advised, “sculpture should be within easy range of the eye...and used sparsely in the high portions,” which are farthest from view. In order to achieve the proper effect, the architect should “prepare silhouettes of the portion which rises above the surrounding buildings.”⁴⁴

As a designer, G. A. Audsley was cognizant of the overall effect of a tall building. His sensitivity towards design and his keen awareness of the impact on observers attest to Audsley’s commitment to refinement expressed in the Bowling Green Office building.

The Bowling Green Office building is the ultimate synthesis of two most important architectural development of the nineteenth-century. It embodies the union of the three part American skyscraper and the European (Scottish) style of Alexander Thomson. Only in 1995, did New York City designate this building a landmark protecting the structure from the threats of demolition.

Organ Design: Wanamaker Organ

After retiring from his architectural career, George Audsley dedicated the rest of his life to writing and designing pipe organs, one of his life-long interests. His largest undertaking was the organ created for the Los Angeles Art Organ Company exhibited in

⁴⁴ Sarah Bradford Landau and Carl W. Condit “The Syndicate-Built Skyscraper, Technical Advances, Continuing Debate, 1895-1900,” *Rise of the New York Skyscraper 1865-1913* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 244. Landau and Condit quotes George Ashdown Audsley, “The Designing of Tall Office Buildings” (c. 1896), in “Note Books of George Ashdown Audsley (188-? – 1924),” vol. 3, collection Music Division, Performing Arts Research Center, New York Public Library.

the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. This gigantic pipe organ (Fig. 32) consists of 10,000 pipes costing \$105,000.⁴⁵ This famous George Audsley pipe organ survives in the interior of the Grand Court of the John Wanamaker Building now the Macy's department store in Philadelphia. This organ is considered as one of the largest in the world and is still continuously played for free concerts scheduled daily at noon and later afternoons entertaining shoppers inside Macy's.

Maurice A. Audsley

Like his father, Maurice Ashdown Audsley (Fig. 33), is an architect⁴⁶ and co-author of *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*. Born in England in 1865, Maurice is the second child and first son of our main author, George Ashdown Audsley and Mary McLellan Audsley (1841-1907). In 1925, he became a photographer in Philadelphia.⁴⁷ It is difficult to distinguish the specifics of Maurice's contribution to this book. However, his name, M. A. Audsley along with his father's name, G. A. Audsley is inscribed at the bottom left corner of each plate. It is possible that Maurice worked with his father in formulating designs. He collaborated with his father only once for this publication on ornament. This is unlike the case with his youngest brother, Berthold Audsley, also an architect,⁴⁸ who co-authored three books⁴⁹ on crafts with his father.

⁴⁵ Walker Art Gallery, *The Audsleys*, n.p.

⁴⁶ The title page of *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* identifies Maurice Ashdown Audsley as an architect written at the bottom of his name.

⁴⁷ David H. Fox 'The Audsley Family.' "George Ashdown Audsley" (David Fox, 1995), 3
<http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/08/pdf/audsley.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2010)

⁴⁸ Listed as head draughtsman in the W. & G. Audsley firm in New York, see Dennis Steadman Francis for the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, *Architects in Practice New York City 1840-1900* (Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, Inc., 1979) 12.

Chapter 2: Publishers: Blackie & Son Ltd. (1809-1991), Firm and Family History, and Blackies' Art Patronage

Though no documented contact between the Audsleys and the Blackies have been found, it is highly possible that the two Scottish families have had interactions that led to the publication of *The Practical Decorator*. Only a small written note⁵⁰ from the Blackie & Son ledger (Fig. 34) regarding the subscription was recorded in the Blackie family papers archived in Glasgow University Archives.

Based in Glasgow, Scotland, Blackie & Son Limited (Fig. 35) had a long productive history spanning almost two centuries. This chapter provides a brief history of the development of the firm along with an introduction into the Blackie family. Then, a discussion of the family's art patronage establishes their link to three design leaders: Alexander Thomson, Talwin Morris, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

⁴⁹ David Fox lists three books, in which G. A. Audsley collaborated with his youngest son, Berthold Audsley. They are: (1) *The Art of Polychromatic and Decorative Training*. London: G. Allen & Co., 1911. Reprinted in 1916; (2) *Artistic and Decorative Stencilling*. 1911. Reprinted in 1916; (3) *Amateur Joinery in the Home*. London: G. Allen & Co., 1912. Reprinted in 1916. For an extensive list of G. A. Audsley writings, see David H. Fox 'The Writings of George Ashdown Audsley on Art and Architecture' "George Ashdown Audsley" (David Fox, 1995), 120-121 <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/08/pdf/audsley.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2010)

⁵⁰ Written Note found in the file of Author's Agreements Vol. 1, 1893- 1900 in Blackie & Son Ltd Papers, UGD 61, Item reference (6.1.1).

Blackie & Son Ltd. (1809-1959): Firm and Family History

The history of the Blackie family and the development of what came to be called the Blackie & Son Limited⁵¹ are closely intertwined. John Blackie, Sr.⁵² (1782-1874) (Fig. 36), the founder of Blackie & Son, was born in Glasgow, Scotland to John Blackie, a tobacco spinner, and Agnes Burrell. He married Catherine Duncan in 1804. They had three children: John Blackie Jr. (1805-1873), Walter Graham Blackie (1816-1906), and Robert Blackie (1820-1896).⁵³ In 1805, John Sr. started his career in publishing when he joined the publishers, W. D. and A. Brownlie. He entered partnerships in 1809 with William Sommerville and Archibald Fullarton, two former employees of Brownlie and Edward Khull, a printer for the Brownlie business, joined and printed for the new partnership that became the W. Sommerville, A. Fullerton & J. Blackie & Co. from 1809-1819. This partnership handled “the issue of books in paper bound sections called *Numbers*, sold by subscription, and delivered to subscribers section by section” making it affordable for people.⁵⁴ In 1819, the partnership split into two sections as Khull, Blackie & Co., publishers and printers in Glasgow and Fullarton, Sommerville & Co., booksellers in Edinburgh, but they were still linked in partnership.⁵⁵ Later, the partnership between

⁵¹ For the history and development of the firm, see Agnes A. C. Blackie, *Blackie & Son (1809-1959) A Short History of the Firm* (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959).

⁵² For a brief biography on John Blackie Sr. and the formation of the Blackie & Son firm see Peter Newbolt, “Blackie, John (1782-1874),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.library.vcu.edu/view/article/58738>> (accessed 17 Jan 2006)

⁵³ Agnes A. C. Blackie includes a family tree of the descendants of John Blackie mentioned in *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959), 167.

⁵⁴ Agnes A. C. Blackie, “The Beginnings 1809-1842,” *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959), 5.

⁵⁵ Blackie, “The Beginnings,” 9.

the two branches dissolved. As John Jr. increasingly became involved in the publishing business, he became a partner in 1826 with his father in Blackie & Son, Glasgow.⁵⁶

Beginning in the 1830s all three sons entered the business either in the publishing or the printing aspect. The much older son with his literary taste and business capacity, John Blackie Jr. (Fig. 37) became partner with his father in the Blackie & Son, Glasgow first. The learned scholar and printer, Walter Graham Blackie (Fig. 38) undertook printing and trained with Khull. In 1829, Blackie Sr. bought Villafield printing company of Andrew and J. M. Duncan. This printing company became the W. G. Blackie & Co. printers, Villafield, headed by the young W. G. Blackie. The art lover of the family, Robert Blackie (Fig. 39), the youngest of the brothers, partnered with his father and older brother, John Jr.⁵⁷ Robert soon directed the company's art department. By 1842, all three of John Sr.'s sons became partners in Blackie & Son.⁵⁸ Agnes Blackie, the company and family historian, summed up the partnership of the three brothers, "John Blackie Senior was indeed very fortunate in his sons. For each of the three possessed such different and yet complimentary abilities that together they formed a perfect business team."⁵⁹ Commenting on the state of the company between the years 1842-1872, Agnes Blackie adds:

The business [John Blackie Senior] has built up was sound in structure, and so satisfactory in general pattern that between 1842 and 1872 there seems to have been no need for radical change. It was a period of consolidation, of expansion and steady progress along assured lines. Innovation was in the main confined to the improvement of detail within

⁵⁶ Blackie, "The Beginnings," 9 and see Newbolt, "Blackie," n.p.

⁵⁷ Blackie, "The Beginnings," 9.

⁵⁸ Blackie, "The Beginnings," 17.

⁵⁹ Agnes A. C. Blackie, "The Quiet Years 1842-1874," *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959), 19.

the familiar patter. New agencies were opened, new printing techniques adopted, new books issued with ever increasing care for the quality of production. Perhaps the most notable innovations ... were the publication of a series of sound and weighty books of reference.⁶⁰

Amidst great changes in the 1870s, the death of John Sr., “left the team of brothers to continue playing ... a man short. The subscription business, flourishing as ever, had to be carried on, and both editorial and printing departments were busy with a major undertaking.”⁶¹ The passage of the Education Acts of 1870, which made elementary education compulsory for all children, led the Blackies to embark into educational publishing directed to children.⁶² A reorientation of the company took place in 1890. “The firm became a Joint Stock Limited Company, [Blackie & Son, Ltd.] ... with Dr. W. G. as Chairman, and his brother Robert, his own two sons and his nephew James R. Blackie as Directors.”⁶³ Later on, the control of the family business was passed on to the third generation Blackies. W. G. Blackie was succeeded by his sons, John Alexander Blackie and Walter Wilfred Blackie. And Robert Blackie was followed by his son, James R. Blackie.⁶⁴ It was W. G. Blackie’s line who continued the family business well into the twentieth century.

Now that we have established a brief history of the firm’s development and an introduction to the family, let us trace their patronage of the arts by establishing connections with three design leaders. First, the Blackies formed ties with Alexander

⁶⁰ Blackie, “The Quiet,” 22.

⁶¹ Agnes A. C. Blackie, “Reorientation 1874-1900,” *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959), 32-33.

⁶² Blackie, “Reorientation,” 32.

⁶³ Blackie, “Reorientation,” 42.

⁶⁴ Blackie, “Family Tree” *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959), 67.

“Greek” Thomson, the first internationally known Scottish architect, with a book and a building. Second, the Blackies’ employment of Talwin Morris as art director of the company resulted in a fruitful relationship. And third, through the Blackies’ association with Talwin Morris, the family developed a link with Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the second Scottish architect of international stature.

Alexander Thomson (1817-1875)

The first internationally known Scottish architect, Alexander Thomson,⁶⁵ (Fig. 40) was born in Glasgow. He became a master of the Greek style so much so that he became known as ‘Greek’ Thomson. Gavin Stamp, a biographer on ‘Greek’ Thomson, describes the architect:

Thomson was a profound thinker as well as an inspired designer. Addressing himself to the problems of a technologically advanced society with new needs,... he arrived at highly original solutions for the building types.... Alexander Thomson designed buildings of an exotic, haunting strangeness that impressed contemporaries and have fascinated or baffled subsequent generations. He took the architectural language of the Greeks, spiced it up with hints from Egypt and the Orient, expanded its possibilities with new materials like plate glass and iron – structural and decorative – and produced modern Classical buildings of a distinctly personal character that were without precedent.⁶⁶

Even though Thomson never traveled outside of Britain, he relied heavily on published sources for architectural inspiration. He was an innovative designer becoming Glasgow’s first architectural hero.

⁶⁵ For sources on Alexander Thomson, see Gavin Stamp, *Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 1999), which includes a definitive list of works, and Gavin Stamp and Sam McKinstry, eds. *‘Greek’ Thomson* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1994).

⁶⁶ Stamp, *Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson*, 9.

The Blackies initiated their ties with Thomson through the book, *Villa and Cottage Architecture* (Fig. 41), published by Blackie & Son in 1869. This publication includes Thomson's designs for Holmwood (Fig. 42), the picturesque Italianate villa located in Cathcart, Renfrewshire located outside of Glasgow.

The Blackies not only published Thomson, but they also had a Thomson designed house. Built in 1867-1877 in Glasgow, Thomson designed a grouping of individual houses with a unified façade in a single block called the Great Western Terrace (Fig. 43). No. 7 Great Western Terrace (Fig. 44) was designated for Robert Blackie, who loved the arts. Gavin Stamp, tells about Thomson's commission from Robert Blackie:

No. 7 [Great Western Terrace] was decorated by Thomson, possibly with Daniel Cottier, [a member of Thomson's circle and an international decorator in the Aesthetic movement] for the publisher, Robert Blackie; Thomson wrote to his brother in 1872 that 'We have had a very tedious and bothersome business with Robert Blackie's House in Great Western Terrace.'⁶⁷

Ian Gow also affirms Thomson's link with Robert Blackie. "In No. 7, which Thomson designed for the publisher Robert Blackie, the stenciled decoration of the entrance hall and staircase has long been painted over."⁶⁸ With much of the interior altered, the exterior still remains intact.

⁶⁷ Qtd. from "A List of Works, Glasgow," listing 1-11 Great Western Terrace, Great Western Road in Gavin Stamp, *Alexander Thomson: The Unknown Genius* with new photography by Phil Sayer. (London: Laurence King Publishing in association with Glasgow 1999 Festival Company Ltd., 1999), 172.

⁶⁸ Ian Gow mentions Robert Blackie as Thomson's patron for No. 7 Great Western Terrace in Chapter 11 "Domestic Interiors" of Gavin Stamp and Sam McKinstry, eds. *'Greek' Thomson*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 165.

Talwin Morris (1865-1911)

In the early 1890s, the internal reorganization of Blackie & Son provided room for the appointment of Talwin Morris. Agnes Blackie comments on the appointment of Talwin Morris:

Robert Blackie had organized the art room on efficient lines under a departmental manager. [He]...kept abreast of contemporary movements in art; and the appointment in 1892 of a disciple of *art nouveau*, Talwin Morris, as head of the art department, had tangible effect, not only on the design of book covers, but on the appearance of the office at 17 Stanhope Street.⁶⁹

From 1893-1909, Morris, a disciple of Art Nouveau and the Glasgow Style, worked for the Blackies' publishing firm designing several bindings during his tenure.⁷⁰ The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts library has a growing collection of Talwin Morris designed bindings, which began from a donation by the late Frederick R. Brandt, VMFA's former curator of Twentieth Century Art. An example of a Talwin Morris designed binding from the VMFA collection is the Red Letter of Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Figs. 45-47), published in 1905. The leitmotif is an exquisitely elegant abstract T-shape cross flanked by two thin plants or blossoms. Positioned in the center, an upright teardrop-shape suggests the formation of the designer's initial, TM. Gerald Cinnamon, a book designer and scholar on Talwin Morris bindings, states his observations for the Red Letter Shakespeare, published in 1905:

Indicative of [Morris'] obvious interest ... is the care and grace with which he designed the endpapers and preliminary pages: half title, title and 'dramatis personae' page and a lovely decorative letter for the start of each

⁶⁹ Blackie, *Blackie & Son*, 42-43.

⁷⁰ Gerald Cinnamon, "Blackie books: Talwin Morris and the Glasgow Style." *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter* No. 28 (Winter 1981):3-6.

introduction. It is one of the very rare and fortunate examples of Morris's concern for the inside of any of his books.⁷¹

Talwin Morris' affinity for simplicity and abstraction produced unique covers of refinement that elevated the Blackie books into art. Morris used the same approach in designing a monument for one of the Blackies. In the early twentieth-century, Morris designed a memorial for a third generation Blackie publisher, John Alexander Blackie at the Necropolis, the great cemetery in Glasgow. The memorial (Fig.48) is a simple design topped with a cross. Though simple, this memorial conveys a powerful meaning through symbolism. Carved within the cross is a butterfly inside an upright teardrop-shape (Fig.49). Underneath, the inscription identifies John Alexander Blackie, his wife and their only son who died in World War I. As a fine example of the Glasgow Style of Mackintosh's circle, Talwin Morris designed the butterfly as a standard symbol of the immortality of the soul that suggests the fragility of life. It is an elegant and effective way to pay homage to a dear friend.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928)

One of the Blackies got a house from Glasgow's first architectural star. Now, let us go to Helensburg, northwest of Glasgow, to visit a house designed by Glasgow's most celebrated architectural star, Charles Rennie Mackintosh (Fig.50). Finished in 1904, Hill House (Fig. 51) was designed by Mackintosh for the publisher, Walter Wilfred Blackie (Fig. 52), one of the third generation of publishing Blackies. Walter W. Blackie met

⁷¹ Gerald Cinamon, "Blackie books: Talwin Morris and the Glasgow Style." Part III *Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society Newsletter* No. 30 (Autumn 1981):4.

Mackintosh through the distinguished designer, Talwin Morris, who was the Art Manager at Blackie & Son and a member of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's circle. Talwin Morris suggested Mackintosh as architect.⁷² This house is acknowledged as Mackintosh's domestic masterpiece. The Blackies entrusted much of the interior design to Mackintosh working with his artist wife, Margaret MacDonald Mackintosh. This famous commission for a Modern house is recognizable through its stark white undulating walls.

The interior, especially the main hall, gives pleasure to visitors as they journey from darkness to light with delightful surprises along the way. Traveling from the dimness of the entry (Fig. 53), one encounters surprises. For instance, in the shadowy hallway, there are subtle flashes of colors such as pink and purple glass jewels (Fig. 54) inlaid in the ebonized planks of wood lining the stairs. When one ascends the steps, suddenly light begins to pour in and colors become visible as the hall widens. For instance, there are flashes of pink colors from the hanging light fixtures and blue stenciled designs with touches of green and pink on the walls (Figs. 55-56). Then, one bursts into a divine white drawing room (Fig. 57). To sum it up, the experience is like passing through a dimly lit tunnel gradually moving towards the light and finally becoming engulfed by the brightness at the end of the tunnel. Mackintosh clearly made the interior for an attentive observer to appreciate and discover the surprises along the way.

⁷² See Alan Crawford, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 100.

Moreover, Charles Rennie Mackintosh was also commissioned by the Blackie firm to design bindings.⁷³ Some handsome Mackintosh bindings (Figs. 58-60) are present in Richmond: one book from the Childrens' Book Collection of the Richmond Public library and two books from the VMFA collection.

⁷³ These Mackintosh bindings are identified and shown in "Chapter 4: Arts and Crafts: Book Arts" of Karen Livingston and Linda Parry, *International Arts and Crafts*, published to coincide with the *International Arts and Crafts* exhibition, (London: V&A, 2005), 87.

Chapter 3: The Book: *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*

Now that we have examined the Blackies and the Audsleys separately, we see both families brought together in *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*⁷⁴ (Fig.1). This publication is a gleaming gem. It shows us George Audsley is a master of reproduction. The book grew out of his belief in educating the amateur decorator in order to elevate a nation's taste. *Practical Decorator* shows that George and Maurice Audsley are beneficiaries of three reformers and design theorists: A. Welby N. Pugin (1812-1852), Owen Jones, and Christopher Dresser. Recycling previous designs, this work is a much broader extension of the Audsleys two previous publications on ornament. George Audsley, particularly, is a master of ornament between two poles: geometric and curvilinear ornament. Standing at the end of a distinguished line of chromolithographed design books, this book is the culmination of two-decade collaboration with the illustrious French family of printers and publishers, Firmin-Didot. Now considered a rare book—Worldcat, the world's largest network of library catalogs, lists only 30 copies—*Practical Decorator* has had an international history in the European continent, in the United Kingdom and in the United States and even surprisingly in Richmond, Virginia.

⁷⁴ According to David H. Fox, who provides an extensive list of Audsley's publications, there is a French edition published in Paris in 1891 entitled *La Decoration Pratique*. This is probably an error. No 1891 edition has been found thus far. The earliest French edition in existence is 1892. See Fox, in 'The Writings of George Ashdown Audsley on Art and Architecture,' "George Ashdown Audsley" (David Fox, 1995), 120-121 <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/08/pdf/audsley.pdf> (accessed January 4, 2010)

Now, we will begin with a history of the various editions of the book. There are two 1892 editions of *The Practical Decorator*. There is an elusive French edition published by the superb printers of Firmin Didot titled *La Décoration Pratique*.⁷⁵ There is an English edition published by Blackie & Son, “for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators and designers.”⁷⁶ Blackie & Son sold the book by subscription, issued in 15 monthly parts, consisting of 6 or 8 folio plates.⁷⁷ The text is of two kinds: front matter (a preface and an introduction) and the description of the plates. Reputedly, there is an 1893 German edition.⁷⁸ Virginia Commonwealth University copy, an unbound folio of the 1892 English edition, is housed in Special Collections and Archives at James Branch Cabell Library.

It has not been possible to see the French edition. This thesis evaluates the VCU copy in comparison to the reprints. With the resurgence of Victorian design, the plates of the 1892 English edition were reprinted in New York by Dover Publications in 1988 as *Victorian Patterns and Designs* (Fig. 61). No editors are given. The purpose is not stated. There is no scholarly apparatus. A Dover publisher’s note replaces the introductory, and Dover captions maintain the headings of each plate from the original, but this reprint ignores the lengthy descriptions. The plates are in order and complete except for the omission of two diagram plates in the introduction. The size is reduced by an unspecified

⁷⁵ A recent Worldcat search on 17 Feb. 2010 showed copies of the 1892 French edition available in: three libraries in the U.S.; five libraries in France; one library in U.K.; and two libraries in the Netherlands.

⁷⁶ Statement from the title page of *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*.

⁷⁷ “Publisher’s Note,” *Victorian Patterns and Designs in Full Color All 100 Plates from “Practical Decorator and Ornamentist” by George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley* (New York: Dover, 1988).

⁷⁸ Kubisch and Seger mentions a 1893 German edition without locating a copy (p.11). It seems likely this reprint reproduces the German edition.

amount. And the quality is no more than adequate. The colors, green, and blue appear muddied and dark.

As evidence of its continuous career, not one but two more recent German editions have appeared under the title, *Ornaments: patterns for interior decoration based on...the practical decorator and ornamentist by George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley* (Fig. 62). They are edited by Natascha Kubisch and Pia Anna Seger, the first in 2001 (Köln, Könemann) and the second in 2007 (Berlin, H. F. Ullman). The two are essentially identical.

These reprints are simply a how-to book with some of qualities of a coffee table book. One editor is Natascha Kubisch, an art historian who specializes in Hispano-Jewish and Islamic decorative art, and the other editor is Pia Anna Seger, an interior decorative painting conservator. There is minimal scholarly apparatus. There is an enormous overlay of new text written in English, German and French, and illustrations that detract from the effect of the collection of the original plates. The editors replace the Audsleys' descriptions with their own commentaries. The plates are not in order, and only 89 of 100 plates are reproduced. The plates are reduced by 20%.⁷⁹ The color quality is sometimes better than the Dover reprint, and the quality is generally much closer to the original. And

⁷⁹ Natascha Kubisch, and Pia Anna Seger, "The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist—A Unique Pattern Book," *Ornaments: patterns for interior decoration based on...the practical decorator and ornamentist by George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley* (Köln, Germany: Könemann, 2001; reprint, Berlin: H. F. Ullman, 2007), 14.

the gold adequately captures the effect on the designs. The Germans sometimes reoriented the plates.⁸⁰

Let us have a closer look at the VCU copy. This copy is arranged mainly into two parts: the front matter and the one hundred plates with descriptive text. The front matter is divided into two sections: the preface, which talks about the aim and the audience; and the introduction which gives valuable rules for application. And the plates are organized into seven divisions: Greek ornament, Neo-Grec ornament, Mediaeval ornament, Renaissance ornament, Japanese ornament, conventional floral ornament, and miscellaneous ornament.

Front Matter: Preface

Written in London in October, 1892, and initialed by G. A. and M. A. Audsley, the preface explains the purpose and gives an expanded list of audience for which the publication is addressed. *The Practical Decorator* points out the lack of practicality that is essentially missing in the other late nineteenth century publications. At the beginning of the preface, the authors state the problem this way:

Although numerous works on Ornament have been published during the past quarter of a century, there has not appeared a single one of an eminently practical character, containing ... designs capable of being executed by the simplest means..., stenciling....

In the present work, which is with confidence submitted to all who require help in decorative art, every endeavour, which a long experience dictates, has been made to avoid the obvious shortcomings... of preceding

⁸⁰ In the German reprints, the plates are smaller and are oriented horizontally as opposed to the original which was oriented vertically. In one case, when the original showed only two-thirds of design for a circular panel, Pl. 17, the plate in the reprint has been altered to show the full design.

publications. It is specially addressed to the practical man and designers generally, and their daily requirements have been steadily kept in view in ...the several hundred designs...on its one hundred Plates.⁸¹

This book reflects G. A. Audsley's commitment to educate the public about art, and to elevate the taste of a nation. This idea stemmed from his lecture on the "Influence of Decorative Art and Art-workmanship in Household Details" a paper read before the art section of the Social Science Congress at Liverpool, on the 17th October, 1876. Audsley believed that decorative art beginning at home and in everyday use has the potential to bring about social good. He is devoted to this idea that he made *The Practical Decorator* a more sensible guide for the professional designer. Through this publication, George is preaching directly to all designers and giving them specific examples of suitable designs "for the decoration of all ordinary classes of buildings, and for the ornamentation of articles of furniture and other objects of utility and beauty."⁸²

At the end of the preface, he expands on the audience. "Accordingly this publication addresses itself to the Architect, the Decorative Artist, the Practical Painter, the Modeller, the Stone Carver, the Wood Carver and Inlayer, the Cabinet-maker, the Potter, the Engraver, and the general Student of Ornamental Art."⁸³ The Audsleys have this audience in mind but, essentially, they focus on painted interior decoration, which is the bulk of the discussion in the introduction.

⁸¹ George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley, "Preface," *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892), v.

⁸² Audsley and Audsley, "Preface," vi.

⁸³ Audsley and Audsley, "Preface," vi.

Front Matter: Introduction

Much of the text in *The Practical Decorator* is consigned in the introduction, which are divided into three highly technical sections: “hints on colouring”, “[hints on] preparing designs and transferring and executing them”, and “hints on the use of the designs given in this work.”⁸⁴ He explains in length about colors, design execution, and rules.

The text proves that the Audsleys are beneficiaries of A. W. N. Pugin, Owen Jones and Christopher Dresser. In “The Decoration of Walls and Vertical Flat Surfaces” within the Introduction, Audsley’s main principles are stated:

The principles which should guide the Practical Decorator in selecting and arranging the patterns and decorative features for the polychromatic ornamentation of the interior walls of a building are few and simple. The most important rule to be observed is this:—No ornament feature, or disposition of ornamental features, should be adopted which will tend to interfere with the architectural treatment of the portion of the building to be decorated; but, on the contrary, every portion of the polychromatic decoration should be devised and disposed with the view of accentuating and enriching the architecture. As we have said in a previous work on decoration, “True architectural decoration is an integral part of architecture, and should grow out of it, assisting its expression and beautifying its constructive elements.”⁸⁵

Audsley ends the passage by quoting his own text from *Polychromatic Decoration*. More important is his unmistakable allegiance to Pugin. In *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841), Pugin wrote:

⁸⁴ George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley, “Contents”, *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the Use of Architects, Practical Painters, Decorators, and Designers, Containing One Hundred Plates in Colours and Gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892), vii.

⁸⁵ George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley, “The Decoration of Walls and Vertical Flat Surfaces,” *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the Use of Architects, Practical Painters, Decorators, and Designers, Containing One Hundred Plates in Colours and Gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892), 27.

The two great rules for design are these: 1st, *that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety*; 2nd, *that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building*.⁸⁶

Owen Jones developed Pugin's principle as Jones' Proposition 5: "Construction should be decorated. Decoration should never be purposely constructed."⁸⁷ Jones's principle has an obvious kinship with the Audsleys, who reiterated the principle:

... both form and colour should always be used to accentuate or express the best forms of the structure to which they are applied. Decoration must always be so used as to aid the eye in recognizing the constructional features of the building; or where decided architectural features are absent, ..., it should be so applied as to compensate for their absence, and to serve as a link ... between the few architectural features and [the] plain surfaces...the predominating tints must serve to aid the leading forms and the best proportions of the building.⁸⁸

Audsley moves on to comment on decorating flat surfaces:

In the decoration of wall-surfaces, their flatness and solidity must be recognized, and no decorative treatment should be adopted which will destroy the appearance of either; accordingly, all shading and shadows which may give the effects of relief or depression must be avoided in whatever decorative designs are applied.⁸⁹

Here again, he shows his unmistakable debt to Owen Jones, who had developed this thinking from Pugin.

Proposition 13: Flowers or other natural objects should not be used as ornaments, but conventional [stylized or flattened] representations founded upon them sufficiently suggestive to convey the intended image to the mind, without destroying the unity of the object [that is, destroying

⁸⁶ A. Welby Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture: set forth in Two Lectures delivered at St. Marie's, Oscott* (London: John Weale, 1841), 1.

⁸⁷ Owen Jones, *Grammar of Ornament, Illustrated by Examples from Various Styles of Ornament* (1856; reprint, London: B. Quaritch, 1910), 5.

⁸⁸ Audsley and Audsley, "The Decoration of Walls," 29.

⁸⁹ Audsley and Audsley, "The Decoration of Walls," 27.

the unity of the surface with shading] they are employed to decorate.
*Universally obeyed in the best periods of Art, equally violated when Art declines.*⁹⁰

Early on, a contemporary of George Audsley, Christopher Dresser, a member of the South Kensington design reform circle, echoes Owen Jones' Proposition 13 in his book, *Studies in Design* first published in 1874:

Flatness is an almost invariable characteristic of walls, and it is a welcome feature both of a wall and of a ceiling also; our decorations of these surfaces must therefore be flat, for it is our duty, as well as our privilege, to express truth.⁹¹

The Audsleys conclude with these strong recommendations when adapting designs for practical use:

In selecting and arranging designs in this work for practical use, the following conditions needful to success should always be had in view:—That the designs brought together to form one decorative composition belong to the same style of ornament.—That the designs be suitably disposed in relation to one another, and also in relation to the size and height of the apartment for which they are to be used. —That the scale of several parts of which the general design is composed be well proportioned to one another. —That the colouring be so accommodated as to produce an effective and harmonious whole.⁹²

Preview of Plates

The Practical Decorator includes one hundred plates divided in seven sections:

Greek ornament (22 plates), Neo-Grec ornament (15 plates), Mediaeval ornament (22

⁹⁰ Jones, *Grammar*, 6.

⁹¹ Christopher Dresser, "On Truthfulness of Expression in Ornamentation" *Studies in Design*, (1874, reprint, Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 2002), 17.

⁹² George and Maurice Ashdown Audsley, "Adaptation of the Designs to Practical Use" *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the Use of Architects, Practical Painters, Decorators, and Designers, Containing One Hundred Plates in Colours and Gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892), 35.

plates), Renaissance ornament (10 plates), Japanese ornament (10 plates), conventional floral ornament (10 plates), and miscellaneous ornament (11 plates). The Audsleys deviated from Pugin and Jones. If Pugin had written the book, all of the contents would be Gothic since he considered all other styles pagan. If Owen Jones had written the book, he would have offered a wide range of designs from all corners of the world as he had done in *Grammar of Ornaments* and as the Audsleys themselves had done in their earlier book, *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles*, (1881). Jones did not cover Japanese and Neo-Grec ornaments, which the Audsleys acknowledged. The Audsleys' *Practical Decorator* offers a limited number of styles: "As the work is designed to be of lasting value, only the standard schools of decorative art are represented in its Plates. The purely modern and temporarily fashionable styles of decorative ornament have not been recognized."⁹³

Size and Content

The 1892 plates in the VCU copy measure to 16¼" x 11¼" while all the reprints are noticeably smaller than the original. The Audsleys purposely "rendered [designs] in the largest sizes practicable, compatible with the desire to give a multitude of examples."⁹⁴ The larger renderings made it easier for any designer to copy and reproduce the designs. Each plate contains the plate number on the top right side. The bottom of each plate has the following information: on the bottom left corner: "G. A. & M. A. Audsley, Inven. et Del.," which means that George and Maurice both invented and drew

⁹³ Audsley and Audsley, "Preface," vi.

⁹⁴ Audsley and Audsley, "Preface," v.

the designs; on the bottom right corner: “Litho. Blackie & Son Limited,” and the bottom center below: “Blackie & Son, Limited, London — Firmin-Didot & Cie. Paris,” which no doubt the latter firm being most likely responsible for the chromolithographic printing.

Chromolithography

“The mechanical perfection which chromolithography, as a reproductive art, finally attained in France, can be studied in the books by George Audsley...with plates by Firmin-Didot and Lemercier.” Ruari McLean⁹⁵

Audsley was a master of reproduction specifically chromolithography, which is essentially color printing. *Chromo* means “color,” and lithography is a surface printing technique using a stone or plate. Richard Godfrey, a noted author on lithography, describes chromolithography. “In its simplest form the design is freely drawn with greasy crayon or ink on the smooth surface of a slab of special limestone, called the lithographic stone. The technique is based on the fundamental antipathy of grease and water.”⁹⁶

In Britain, chromolithography flourished from the early to the mid-nineteenth century. *The Practical Decorator* has its part in the advancement of chromolithography in the publication of design books that began with Owen Jones’s *Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of the Alhambra* first published in the 1840s. Ruari McLean, an

⁹⁵ Ruari McLean, “The Advance of Chromolithography” *Victorian Book Design and Colour Printing* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963), 101.

⁹⁶ Richard Godfrey. “Lithography.” In *The Oxford Companion to Western Art*, edited by Hugh Brigstocke. *Oxford Art Online*, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t118/e1493> (accessed March 3, 2010).

authority on Victorian book design, praised the Audsleys' chromolithographed publications for their superb quality.⁹⁷ At the end of the nineteenth century, the use of chromolithography began to decline in Britain while it continued to flourish in France. Joan Friedman, a noted scholar on color printing in England, conveys the waning of chromolithography in Britain:

After 1870 chromolithography was used less and less for book illustration. Artists interested in graphic design, e.g., Walter Crane and Edward Burne-Jones, found wood engraving a more congenial medium, and for some decades a monochrome style of design prevailed; whereas those interested in reproducing works of art from other media increasingly turned to photographic processes. Chromolithography had always been a superior medium for depicting the flat color patterns of ornamental designs, and for that purpose it continued to be used into the twentieth century. Audsley's *Practical decorator* was a much simpler book to print than his *Art of chromolithography*...of a decade earlier. The latter had been a eulogy to a process grown too complicated to be useful, but this book demonstrated that there might still be appropriate,... uses for chromolithography. As a pictorial reproductive medium, though its day was over.⁹⁸

The Practical Decorator was at the sunset of chromolithographed design books in the nineteenth century in Britain.

With the waning of chromolithography in England in the late nineteenth century, an opposite situation happened in France. The Audsleys looked to France where a revival of chromolithography flourished. While artists in Britain turned back to wood engraving, artists in France relied increasingly on color lithography, thus resulting in its success. In fact, chromolithography thrived commercially in the production of posters and ads

⁹⁷ Ruari McLean notes the quality of the chromolithographed publications of G. A. Audsley in, "The Advance of Chromolithography" *Victorian Book Design and Colour Printing* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963), 81-102.

⁹⁸ Joan M. Friedman, *Color Printing in England 1486-1870: an Exhibition Yale Center for British Art 20 April-25 June 1978* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 1978) entry no.189, 65.

designed by artists.⁹⁹ Let us turn to France to meet the firm responsible for the chromolithographic printing.

Firmin-Didot & Cie. and Didot Family

The Audsleys looked to the Parisian printer Firmin-Didot & Co. to replicate their designs with accurate color. Firmin-Didot was an illustrious firm, which included generations of “typographers, printers, publishers, and collectors.”¹⁰⁰ The firm was named after Firmin Didot (1764-1836), the typefounder of the family and the younger son of François Ambroise Didot (1730-1804), whose family line produced successful descendants. According to an essay by Joseph Blumenthal in the catalogue published by the Pierpont Morgan Library, François Ambroise, a typographer and printer by trade, was “known as *l’aîné* [Senior]. He was the first to give the Didot touch to type and to bookmaking. He was printer by appointment to the Comte d’Artois, the King’s brother. By order of Louis XVI he printed and published a famous collection of French authors.”¹⁰¹ Following in his father’s footsteps, Firmin was also renowned as a printer, a papermaker and a literary figure.¹⁰² He took charge of the family’s foundry, “where he designed and cut the famous [Didot] types used by his brother [Pierre Didot L’aîné

⁹⁹ For more on the use of chromolithography in commercial production in France, see, [Phillip Dennis Cate, *The Color Revolution: Color Lithography in France, 1890-1900* \(Santa Barbara, Ca:P. Smith, 1978\)](#)

¹⁰⁰ Linda Whiteley. “Didot.” In *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online* <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art/T022671> (Accessed 20 Jan 2010)

¹⁰¹ Joseph Blumenthal, “The Great Printers and Their Books,” *Art of the Printed Book 1455-1955: Masterpieces of Typography Through Five Centuries from the Collections of the Pierpont Morgan Library* (London: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1973), 29.

¹⁰² Albert J. George, *The Didot Family and the Progress of Printing* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1961), 9.

(1761-1853)] in the printing of the extraordinary *Éditions du Louvre* and other

publications.”¹⁰³ During his successful career, Firmin held government appointments:

He became printer to the Institut de France on October 16, 1811, and the next year was invited to reform the typography of the Imprimerie Impériale. Apparently above politics, he was named royal printer in April, 1814. In 1827, full of honors, he relinquished his enormous firm to his sons, after which ... [he] thrice sat as deputy for l'Eure.¹⁰⁴

Firmin was the leading printer in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and

he was honored for his accomplishments.

In 1830 the Government offered him the position of director of the Royal Printing-office, which, however, he declined. He was decorated with the medal of the Legion of Honour, and appointed Printer to the King and to the French Institute. The Government had his bust in marble placed in one of the halls of the Imperial Printing-office, and a medal in his honour was struck after his death. His portrait, painted by his friend Girodet, is hung in the gallery of the Louvre. A medal was struck at Paris in honour of Firmin Didot in 1839.¹⁰⁵

According to Albert George, who wrote a brief review of the family titled *The Didot Family and the Progress of Printing*, “by the early nineteenth century Firmin’s part of the House of Didot was one of the best known printing establishments in the world. His sons, Ambroise and Hyacinthe, who succeeded him, felt so proud of their father that they changed their patronym to Firmin-Didot.”¹⁰⁶ The brothers Ambroise Firmin-Didot (1790-1876) and Hyacinthe Firmin-Didot (1794) took over the family business in the nineteenth century as Firmin-Didot Frères.¹⁰⁷ The two siblings worked closely together

¹⁰³ Blumenthal, “The Great Printers,” 30.

¹⁰⁴ George, *The Didot*, 9.

¹⁰⁵ F.C. Bigmore and C.W.H. Wyman, “The Didot Family” vol. 1 of *A Bibliography of Printing with Notes & Illustrations compiled by F. C. Bigmore and C.W.H. Wyman*, (1880, reprint, London: Holland Press Limited, 1978), 178.

¹⁰⁶ George, *The Didot*, 9.

¹⁰⁷ Bigmore and Wyman, *The Didot*, 178.

even with their own specialized skills. Ambroise Firmin sold the type foundry branch of the business to the Fonderie Générale of Paris at an unspecified date.¹⁰⁸ The printing bibliographers Bigmore and Wyman quote an article, originally appeared in 1876 in *The Printing Times and Lithographer* as stating that “his works... remained the most complete in France, and were, perhaps, the only office where all the branches of printing and its many ramifications were conducted under one head; for it embraced not only publishing and printing, but paper-making, on the largest scale.”¹⁰⁹ Like his father, Firmin, Ambroise Firmin also gained high acclaim for his contributions to the French printing industry:

Decorated with the order of the Legion of Honour in 1825, he was named as an officer 13th November, 1860. He succeeded his father as printer to the Institute of France in 1855. It may therefore be said, with the strictest justice, that he was worthily regarded as the personal embodiment of the honour and glory of the printing profession in France. He was also, in every respect, a “learned printer,” and in correspondence with the principal *savants* of his time.¹¹⁰

Ambroise Firmin’s younger brother, Hyacinthe took over as the director of the Didot printing office in 1857. It is unknown when Hyacinthe died and ceased control of the business. It is even more obscure who in the family was involved in the printing of the Audsley books.

The Audsleys had a meaningful and productive collaboration with Firmin-Didot.

The Audsleys used the services of Firmin-Didot in the printing of significant publications

¹⁰⁸ The same information is mentioned in both George, *The Didot*, p.10 and in Bigmore, *The Didot*, p.178. George ends the Didot dynasty with Ambroise Firmin, while Bigmore and Wyman mentions that only the type foundry branch was sold, and it seemed that other branches of the family business remained intact. “Much to his regret, he had to sell to the Société de la Fonderie Générale that branch of his business which was connected with typefounding.”p.4

¹⁰⁹ Bigmore and Wyman, *The Didot*, 178.

¹¹⁰ Bigmore and Wyman, *The Didot*, 180.

such as *Keramic Arts of Japan* (Fig. 14) published in 1875 and 1881 in London by Sotheran & Co.; *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (Fig. 63) published in 1882 in London by Sotheran & Co. with William and George Audsley; and *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*.

The Plates

This work is a much broader extension of George Audsley's two previous publications on ornament. As we have seen, Audsley produced three design books that emphasized practicality: *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles*¹¹¹ (Fig. 64) (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881), *Polychromatic Decoration*¹¹² (1882), and *The Practical Decorator* (1892). By examining each of the seven sections of ornaments, we will see George Audsley as a master of ornament between two poles, geometric and curvilinear ornament. This design book is largely dominated by floral and foliage ornaments with some geometric patterns.

The *Decorator's* chromolithographed plates seduce the eye with vivid colors -- green, blue, olive, purple, red, orange, and yellow -- along with subtle gradations that create a creamy quality. Most noticeable is the use of gold, producing an exquisite iridescent quality that seizes the eye's attention.

¹¹¹ William J. Audsley and George A. Audsley made a case for practicality and for categorizing designs into types of motif regardless of the style and origin in, "Preface," *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles: Selected from Executed Ancient and Modern Works; A Book of Reference for the Architect, Sculptor, Decorative Artist, and Practical Painter* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881).

¹¹² William J. Audsley and George A. Audsley, "Preface," *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles: Thirty-six plates in Colours and Gold, with General Introduction and Descriptive Letterpress* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882), vii.

Greek Ornament

The Audsleys present us with twenty-two plates developed from ancient Greek ornaments. These designs are “suitable for modern use, either for the decoration of buildings or for the ornamentation of articles of utility and beauty.”¹¹³ The Audsleys reused some of their designs from previously published designs such as those in *Outlines*. For example, designs 5 and 6 in Fret Ornament, Egyptian and Classical (Fig. 65) show up again in plates 2 and 3 in *Practical Decorator* (Figs. 66). Sometimes, the Audsleys even improved upon previous designs like three designs for anthemias or palmettes in the right column of a plate labeled Conventional Foliage, Greek [B] (Fig. 67). Three of these designs on the right (top, middle and bottom) were reworked in plates 4 and 19 in *Practical Decorator* (Figs. 68-69) varied sometimes combined with a fret design.

Neo-Grec Ornament

With fifteen plates, the ornaments interpreting the French Neo-Grec or New Greek style “indicate its free and modernized character.... In this free style, suggestions from other schools of ornament are allowed or encouraged.... Hence one may find on one hand a co-mingling of Egyptian forms and features, and, on the other, a leaning towards medieval and early Renaissance mannerisms.”¹¹⁴ These ornaments are “well adapted to the decoration of a very large class of buildings of a semi-classic character or

¹¹³ George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley, “Hints on the use of the Designs given in this work” *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the Use of Architects, Practical Painters, Decorators, and Designers, Containing One Hundred Plates in Colours and Gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892), 25.

¹¹⁴ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 25-26.

style of architecture, ecclesiastical and domestic.”¹¹⁵ The Audsleys did not present any Neo-Grec design in their previous publications on ornament, but they varied some designs to make it look Neo-Grec. For instance, a mediaeval pattern with several leaves springing from one straight stem introduced in Pl. 17, design 4, of *Polychromatic Decoration* (Fig. 70) was modified into anthemion, and this pattern was presented as Neo-Grec in Pl. 24 (design on the right side) (Fig. 71).

Mediaeval Ornament

These twenty-two plates of Mediaeval designs are based on remains of Gothic decorations from English and French churches. “The designs are adopted for the... decoration of churches, public buildings, and dwelling houses erected in the Gothic styles; they present the true spirit of ancient work without any of its crudity and extreme quaintness.”¹¹⁶ Compared to *Polychromatic Decoration*, these designs are far more conservative, without the fantastic animals. As in other sections, the Audsleys recycled designs from previously published designs like those in *Outlines* and *Polychromatic Decoration*. From *Outlines*, designs 1 and 2 (Fig. 72) from Diaper Ornament, Modern French [C] were improved in Pl. 50 (Fig. 73) using the same geometrical patterns of quatrefoils and Greek-crosses with a more enhanced foliage running thru the geometrical patterns. From *Polychromatic Decoration*, designs 1 and 3 from Pl. 12 (Fig. 74) show the same basic geometric diaper pattern for vertical surfaces as in Pl. 53 of *Practical Decorator* (Fig. 75) except for the addition of more expressive foliage. Also, in Pl. 18 of

¹¹⁵ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 25.

¹¹⁶ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 26.

Polychromatic Decoration designs 2, 3, and 4 (Fig. 76) have a close resemblance to designs found in Pl. 40 of *Practical Decorator* (Fig. 77).

Renaissance Ornament

Renaissance ornaments show ten plates “for the decoration of buildings in the Free Classic, Italian, and the modern styles derived from the several Renaissance schools.”¹¹⁷ The Audsleys suggest these designs are “suitable for the ornamentation of furniture by painting or inlaying.”¹¹⁸ There are no exact matches found from previous publications. This is a style that interested the Audsleys a good deal less. There are connections with previous designs, though. The Audsleys redressed some designs and made them fit into their Renaissance category. For instance, Pl. 68 (Fig.78), a modified pattern of masonry blocks, is an adaptation of a High Victorian Gothic theme introduced in plates 2 to 5 of *Polychromatic Decoration* (Figs.79-82). The Audsleys adapted this theme in six out of seven sections with variations fitting them into specific style categories.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 26.

¹¹⁸ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 26.

¹¹⁹ The Audsleys’ adaptation of the High Victorian Gothic theme of masonry pattern are seen in six sections in Pl. 20 and 21 of the Greek ornament; in Pl. 37 of Neo-Grec ornament; Pl. 51 and 51 of Mediaeval ornament; Pl. 68 of Renaissance ornament; Pl. 76 of Japanese ornament; and Pl. 88 of Conventional floral ornament.

Japanese Ornament

The Audsleys offer ten plates of Japanese ornaments, “devoted to the illustration of characteristic Japanese decoration and ornament”¹²⁰ The authors note that these may seldom have a use in architectural decoration but can be useful for the decoration of furniture.¹²¹ These rich designs capture the essence of Japan through motifs such as Japanese frets and bamboo, chrysanthemum blossoms, and heraldic crests called mon. The lavish use of gold illuminates the designs and generates an iridescent quality on the page. This effect is palpable in Pl. 75 (Fig.83) as the gold blossoms glimmer from the black background, catching the viewers’ attention. A more liberal application of gold is also visible in both designs on Pl. 72 (Fig.84), which are recycled from designs 2 and 3 of Diaper Ornament, Japanese [B] of *Outlines* (Fig.85). The later versions were oriented horizontally and left out the swastika that was present in *Outlines*.

Conventional Floral Ornament

Ten plates exhibit designs for conventional floral ornaments. These are “highly suitable for the decoration of dwelling-houses and other buildings which have no pronounced style of architecture.”¹²² The Audsleys were free to experiment and show designs ranging from ordinary floral motifs to plates 84 and 85 (Figs.86-87), which blossom with freshness. In particular, these plates stand out for the designs’ naturalistic tendency and for the Audsleys’ preference for green. Nonetheless, the designs still follow

¹²⁰ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 26.

¹²¹ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 26.

¹²² Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 26.

strong adherence to disciplined and flattened decoration. Pl. 85 is an inspired reworking of two Neo-Grec designs in Pl. 36 (Fig.88).

Miscellaneous Ornament

Eleven additional plates included under the heading Miscellaneous Ornament show diverse “designs for borders, bands, centre-pieces, and powderings not strictly belonging to the styles of ornament ... in the six preceding sections, and [designs for] flat polychromatic renderings of architectural details in the Mediaeval and Neo-Grec styles.”¹²³ Interlaced ornaments for bands and borders in Plates 90 and 91 (Figs.89-90) present possible hybrids or imaginative patterns that were inspired by either Celtic or Moresque designs. When it comes to architectural details, Pl. 100 (Fig.91) has three designs for battlemented crestings recycled from designs in Pl. 20 of *Polychromatic Decoration* (Fig.92). The diversity of designs makes this section simply miscellaneous.

Significant Presence in Richmond and in United States

The Practical Decorator must have provided an invaluable source for practical use as opposed to a more rigid, theory-based publication on ornament. It is difficult to trace the magnitude of its impact, and the task is out of the scope of this thesis. Most of the evidence is ephemeral with painted decoration; it is oftentimes painted over. The impact is not easy to quantify.

¹²³ Audsley and Audsley, “Hints,” 27.

This thesis does offer three evidences of its significant presence in the United States especially in Richmond. The three instances occurred long past the Audsleys' lifetime. First, *The Practical Decorator* was purchased for VCU to support what would become a nationally known interior design program. Second, Bradbury & Bradbury, a nationally prominent wallpaper firm, shows the translation of Audsleys designs into a new medium, wallpaper. Third, a recent discovery proves the continuous use of Audsleys' designs from this publication in the United States.

***Practical Decorator's* Presence in Richmond**

The first case will show the condition for the purchase of *The Practical Decorator*. Based on a 1995 survey report on the "Rare Design Books in the James Branch Cabell Library..." conducted by a VCU graduate student, Mark D'Amato, we know that the *Practical Decorator* was part of a large acquisition designed as a reference collection for design students. In 1952, the School of the Arts, which was part of VCU's predecessor, Richmond Professional Institute, a branch of the College of William and Mary, created the department of Interior Design and Interior Decoration, offering a B.F.A. degree. The following year, Robert Hester was named head of the department and had developed a survey in interior design.¹²⁴ According to D'Amato's report,

From the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, Mr. Hester and Rosamond McCanless, the librarian at RPI from 1932 to 1968, worked together to buy the design books. Though the timeframe when these books were purchased was unclear, [D'Amato's] research unearthed a photograph from April 1, 1954 that shows

¹²⁴ Mark D'Amato. "Rare Design Books in the James Branch Cabell Library of Virginia Commonwealth University" (paper presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for ARH 544, Department of Art History, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1995), 2.

Mr. Hester, Ms. McCanless and some students standing behind a number of books on a table. These books are identified as “new additions to the library designed to improve the available reference books for the design majors,”¹²⁵

The partnership between the Interior Design department and the library amassed the collection of rare design books for instructional and curricular support. In the late 1980s, Dr. Suzanne Freeman, head of Collection Management, pulled the rare books from the regular stacks and transferred them into Special Collections.¹²⁶

Bradbury & Bradbury looks to *Practical Decorator*

Without copyright for the designs, it is easy for manufacturers to reproduce Audsleys’ designs. The second case involves Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpaper Co. of Benicia, California, a nationally prominent wallpaper firm, which translated the Audsleys’ Greek designs into a new medium, wallpaper. This wallpaper company continues to play a major role in historic preservation projects. Bradbury & Bradbury copied Pl.18 and 20 (Fig. 93) with the Greek anthemion patterns from *The Practical Decorator*. Plate 18 was used as the Audsleys suggested for the frieze and plate 20 was relegated to the dado originally for a masonry or brick pattern for vertical surfaces. In fact, Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpaper is still in business today producing these patterns which they advertise as Neo-Greek or Neo-Grec¹²⁷ (Fig. 94-95). They acknowledge in their catalog (Fig. 96) that they have copied these patterns from the

¹²⁵ D’Amato. “Rare,” 2.

¹²⁶ D’Amato. “Rare,” 2-3.

¹²⁷ Neo-Grec Roomset photo by Ron Mitchell in Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers. *Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers Catalog and Price List*, (Benicia, CA: Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers, 1998). Also see NG-2, NG-4 and NG-5 to compare the match with Plate XVIII and the frieze pattern and Plate XX with the pattern on the dado.

Audsleys. These patterns have a local presence. In 1988-89, respected Washington interior designer Dudley Brown redesigned the 1915 auditorium of Women's Club also known as the Bolling Haxall House, built in 1858. Brown used the Bradbury & Bradbury wallpapers (Fig. 97) taken from the Audsleys' Greek anthemion patterns.

The *Practical Decorator* goes to Las Vegas

A recent visit to Las Vegas revealed the Audsleys presence in Nine Fine Irishmen Pub inside the New York New York Hotel and Casino. Designed in the late 1990s by the Irish Pub Company, the interior (Figs. 98-99a) is modeled on a Victorian-style pub. The walls are covered with dark timbered panels and furnitures along with painted mediaeval floral and interlaced decoration. A section of the pub's wall has the Audsleys' designs lifted from *Practical Decorator*. All the designs are stenciled. It was a coincidental and a surprising discovery. Even more startling is that not just two but five designs were copied directly from four different plates of *The Practical Decorator*. Pl. 50 (Fig. 99b), a pattern of mediaeval foliage bursting through quatrefoils, covers a large portion of the first floor walls not covered with wood panels. One of the designs from Pl. 58 (Fig. 99c), a floral design with two leaves, serves as a transition band with a slight variation. Pl. 92 (Fig. 100), a floral powdering, covers a huge portion of the wall facing the second floor level (Fig.101). The two related but varied bands of interlaced patterns of Pl. 91 (Fig.102), act as transitions and borders to the powdered wall.

Conclusion

The Practical Decorator is a major achievement involving a trifecta of families devoted to producing a work of art. The involvement of the Audsleys, the Blackies, and the Didots together in a paramount publication is a rare feat.

This thesis has made three major contributions. First, it offered the first fresh study of the Audsleys in a decade, advancing the rediscovery of the Audsleys, whose contributions on ornament have largely been ignored by most scholars. Second, this thesis has presented the first analysis of the Blackies' art patronage – patronage of Alexander Thomson, Talwin Morris, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh – establishing them as major figures in the arts in an international scale. And, third, this thesis has provided the first detailed evaluation of the *Practical Decorator*, one of the great design books of the nineteenth century, which inspires new generations of designers.

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Figures

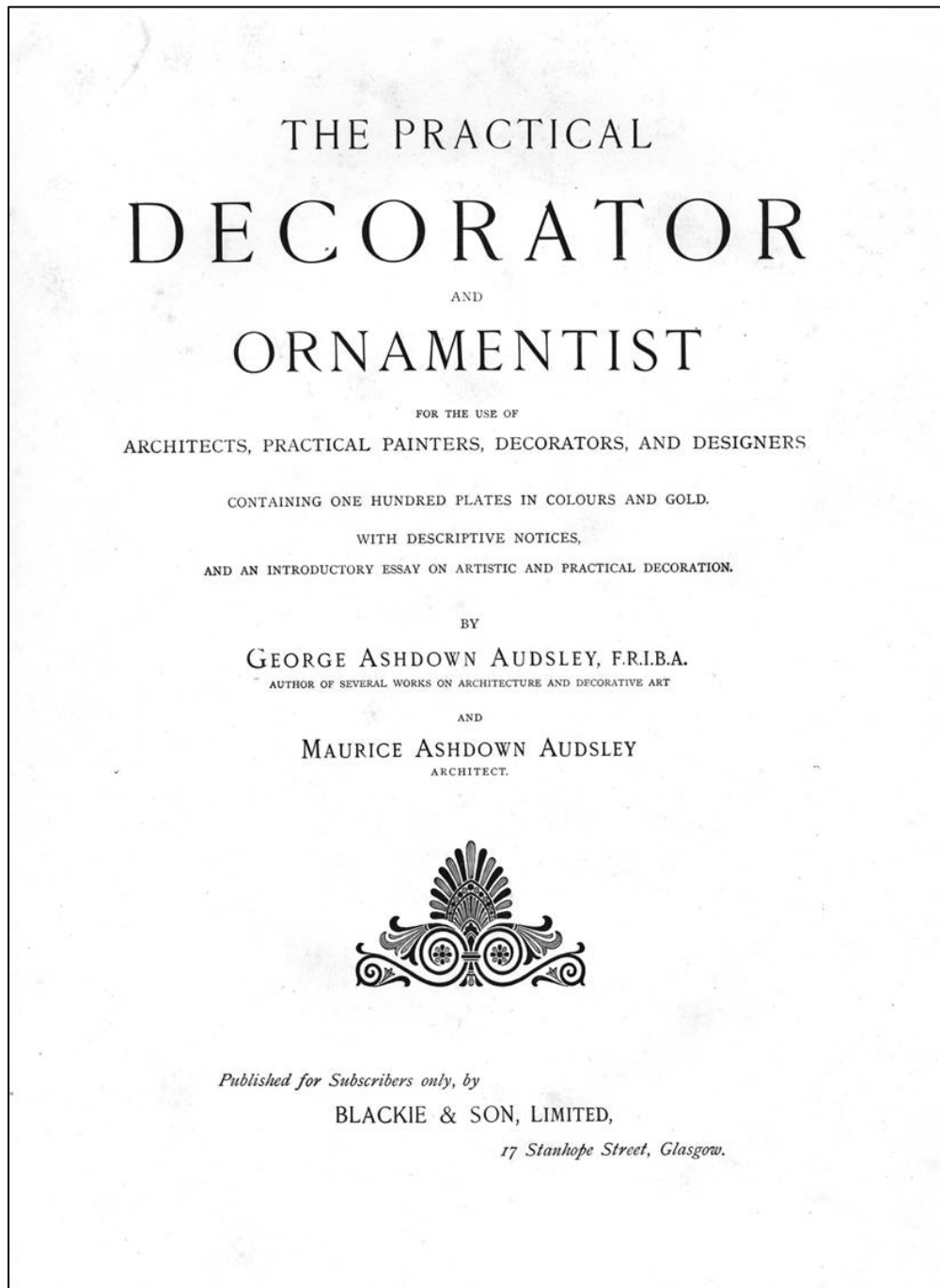


Figure 1. George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley, *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*, Title Page, 1892. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library Special Collections and Archives.

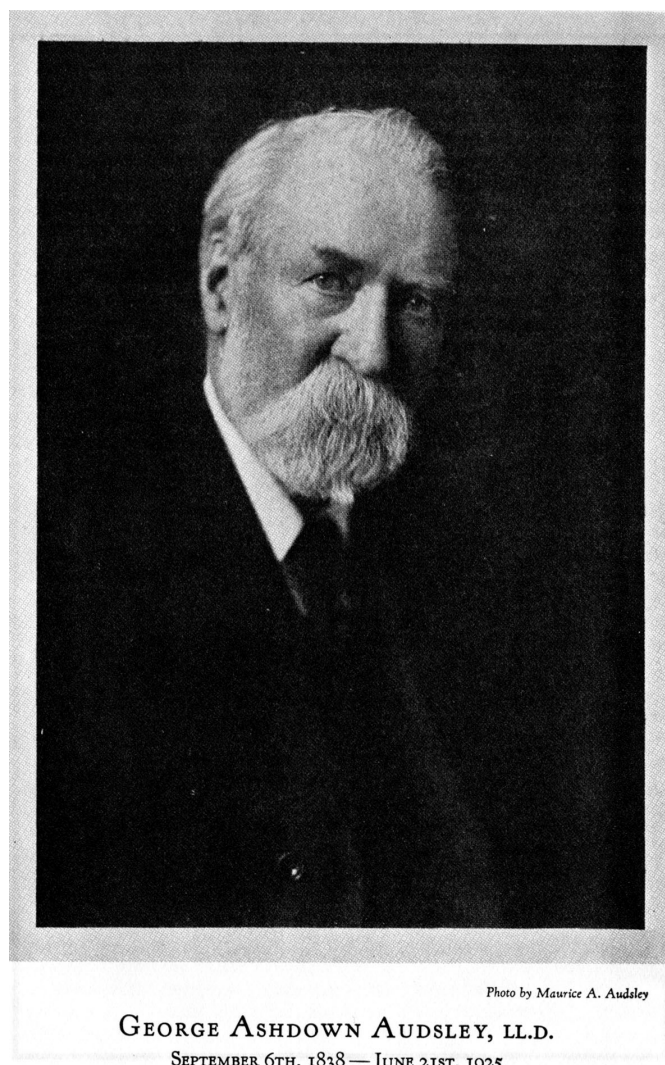


Figure 2. Maurice A. Audsley, *George Ashdown Audsley, LL.D., 1838-1925*. From Audsley, George Ashdown. *The Temple of Tone: A Disquisition on the Scientific and Artistic Tonal Appointment and Control of Concert-Room, Church, and Theater Organs, According to the Advanced System of Compound Tonal Flexibility and Expression with Complete Specifications* (1925, reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1965).



Figure 3. W. and G. Audsley. *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, façade, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. From Sharman Kadish, ed. *Building Jerusalem: Jewish Architecture in Britain* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1996).



Figure 4. W. and G. Audsley. *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, facade without the minarets, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, June 2006.



Figure 5. *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, Interior, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. Photo Courtesy of David Moffat and Alyson Pollard of Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.



Figure 6. *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, View of the Bimah, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. Photo Courtesy of David Moffat and Alyson Pollard of Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.



Figure 7. *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, Detail, Ark's dome and capitals, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, June 2006.



Figure 8. W. & G. Audsley. *Cylindrical Chair*, Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue.
Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, June 2006.



Figure 9. *Council Chamber*, Nothampton Guidhall (formerly Northampton Town Hall).
From Susan Weber Soros, *The Secular Furniture of E.W. Godwin with Catalogue
Raisonné* (New York: Yale University Press, 1999).



Figure 10. E.W. Godwin, *Councillor's Chair*, 1865, made by Green and King, Nothampton Guidhall (formerly Northampton Town Hall). From Susan Weber Soros, *The Secular Furniture of E.W. Godwin with Catalogue Raisonné* (New York: Yale University Press, 1999).

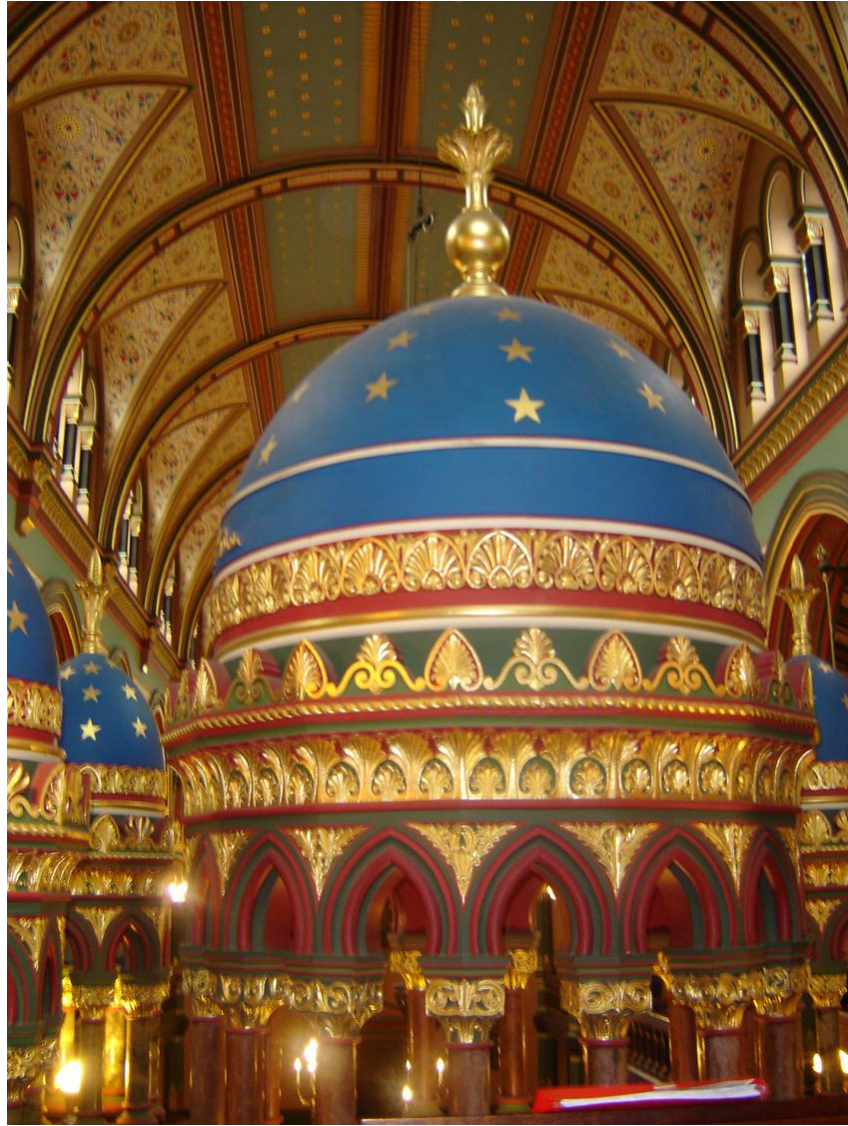


Figure 11. W. & G. Audsley. *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, Interior Details of domes, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, June 2006.



Figure 12. W. & G. Audsley, *Old Hebrew Congregation Synagogue*, Rose window, east end, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1874. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, June 2006.

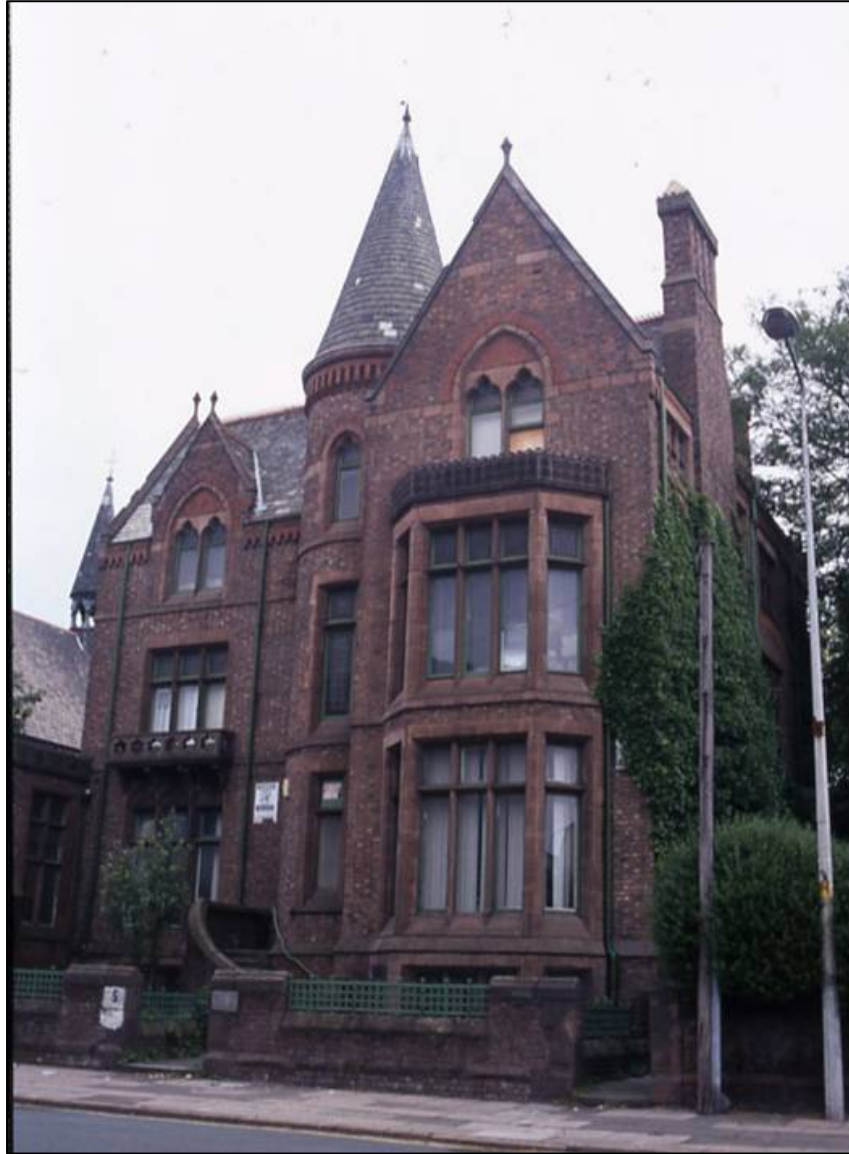


Figure 13. W. and G. Audsley. *Streatlam Towers*, façade, Prince Road, Liverpool, England, 1872. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, June 2006.

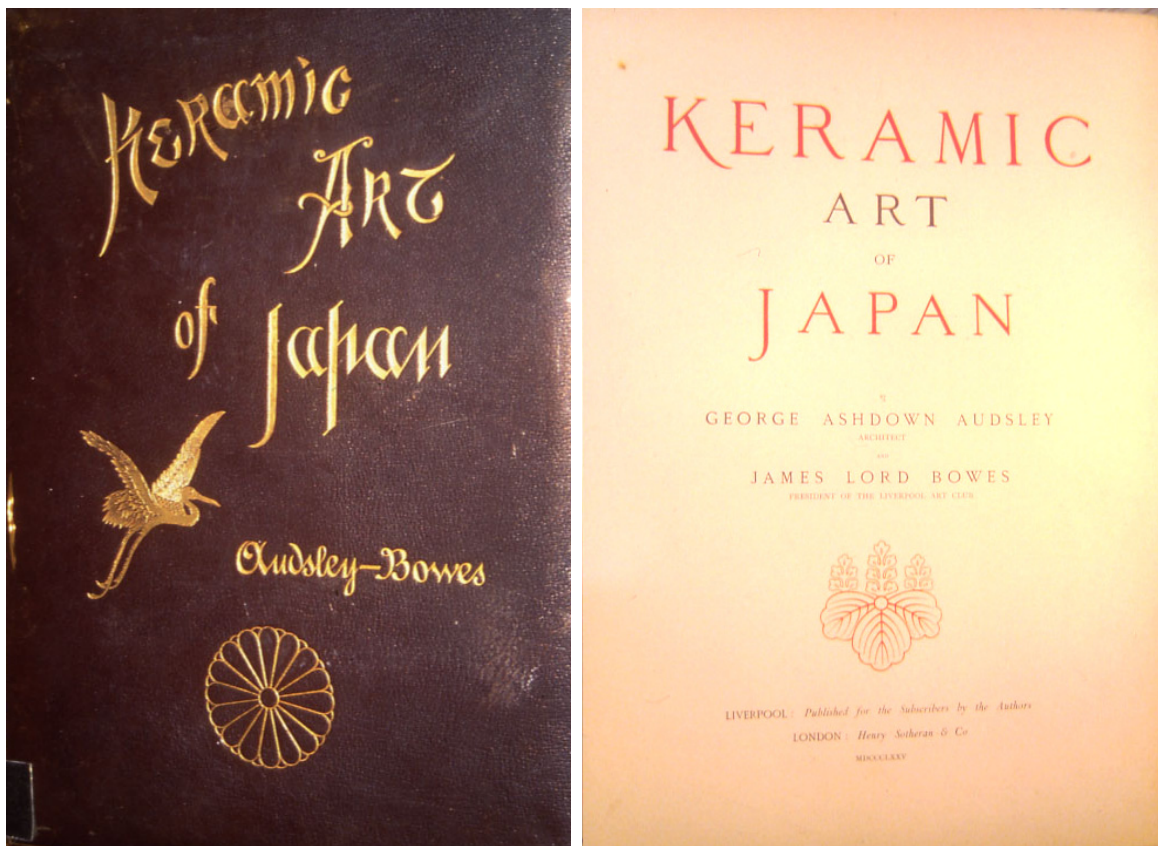


Figure 14. Front Cover and Title Page, George Ashdown Audsley, and James L. Bowes *Keramic Art of Japan*, Published by Henry Sotheran & Co., London, 1881. Photos by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Library.



Figure 15. Plate 14, George Ashdown Audsley and James Lord Bowes. *Keramic Art of Japan*, Published by Henry Sotheran & Co., London, 1881. Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Library.



Figure 16. Detail, Pl. 14, George Ashdown Audsley and James Lord Bowes. *Keramic Art of Japan*, Published by Henry Sotheran & Co., London, 1881. Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Library.



Figure 17. Unknown pattern, Minton China Works, 1884. A Gift from Charles Brownell to Gay Acompañado, 2007.



Figure 18. Salvatore Albano. *Portrait Bust of Frederick Layton*, 1889, Milwaukee Art Museum, Layton Art Collection. From Milwaukee Art Museum, *1888: Frederick Layton and His World* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Milwaukee Museum of Art, 1988).



Figure 19. W. and G. Audsley. *Layton Art Gallery*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1885-1888.
From David Van Zanten, "George Ashdown Audsley and the Layton Art Gallery,"
Alexander Greek Thomson Newsletter No. 27 (Sep. 2000): 8-18.

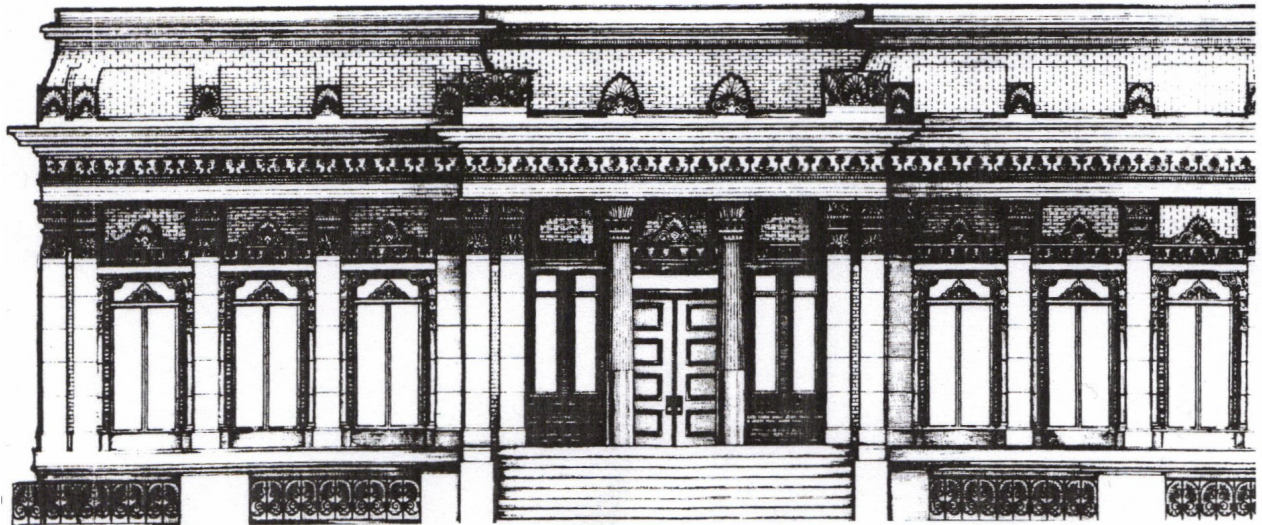


Figure 20. W. and G. Audsley. *Layton Art Gallery*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1885-1888.
From Van Zanten, David. "George Ashdown Audsley and the Layton Art Gallery,"
Alexander Greek Thomson Newsletter No. 27 (Sep. 2000): 8-18.



Figure 21. W. and G. Audsley. *Bowling Green Office Building*, 5-11 Broadway, New York, New York, 1895-1898. Photo Published in *American Architect and Building News* on July 27, 1901. Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 22. W. and G. Audsley. Plate 19, Details-Bowling Green Office Building, New York, Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Co. From Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Co., Philadelphia. *Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Company 1898 Catalogue* (Philadelphia: Conkling-Armstrong, 1898).

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TELEPHONE 9005

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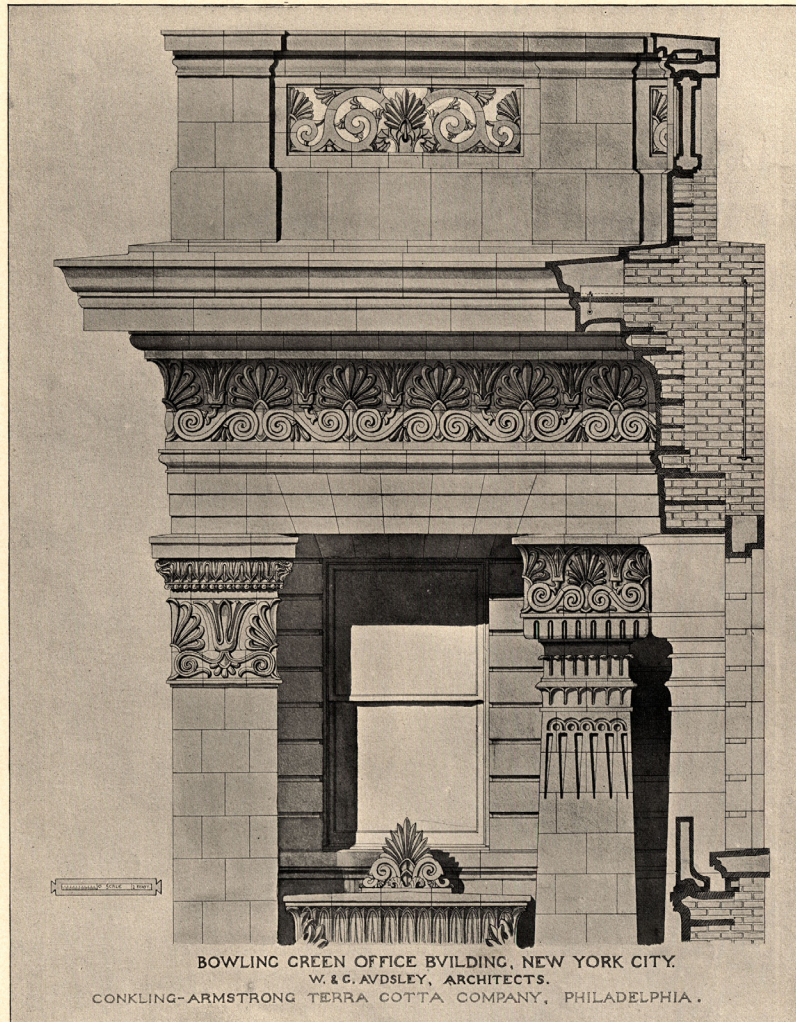


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Figure 23. W. and G. Audsley. Plate 20, Details-Bowling Green Office Building, New York, Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Co. From Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Co., Philadelphia. *Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Company 1898 Catalogue* (Philadelphia: Conkling-Armstrong, 1898).



Figure 24. Detail of Entrance, *Bowling Green Office Building*, 5-11 Broadway, New York, New York, 1895-1898. Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, March 2007.



Figure 25. George A. Audsley and Maurice A. Audsley. Pl. 18, Greek ornament, Frieze or creasing design. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 26. George A. Audsley and Maurice A. Audsley. Pl. 95, Miscellaneous ornament, Decoration of architectural order, in Neo-Grec style. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

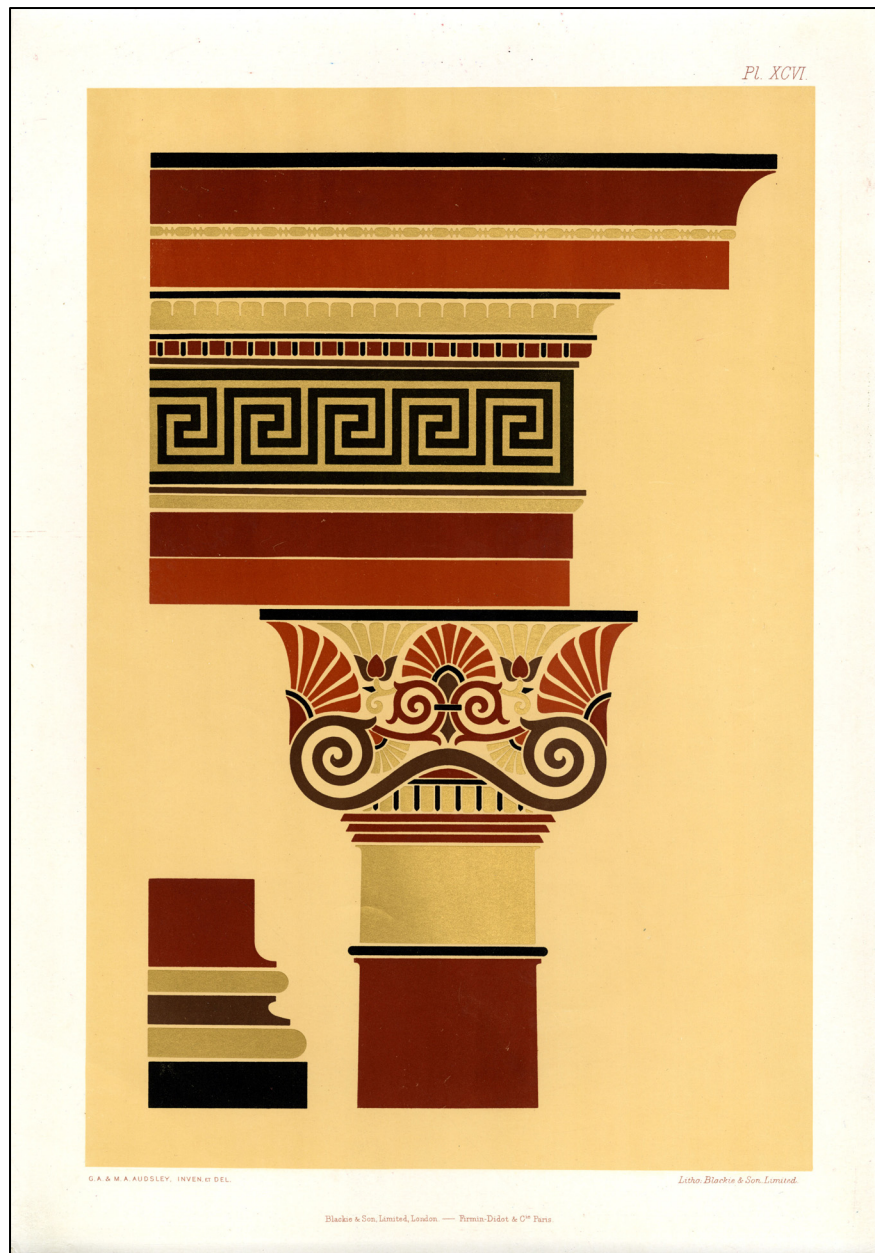


Figure 27. George A. Audsley and Maurice A. Audsley. Pl. 96, Miscellaneous ornament, Decoration of architectural order, in Neo-Grec style. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 28. Entrance, *Bowling Green Office Building*, 5-11 Broadway, New York, New York, 1895-1898. Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, March 2007.



Figure 29. Alexander Thomson. *Queen's Park Church* (Thomson's own print of Thomas Annan's photograph of the Queen's Park Church taken soon after completion in 1869). From Gavin Stamp, *Alexander 'Greek' Thomson* (London: Laurence King Publishing in association with Glasgow 1999 Festival Company Ltd., 1999).



Figure 30. Detail, *Bowling Green Office Building*, 5-11 Broadway, New York, New York, 1895-1898. Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, March 2007.



Figure 31. Alexander Thomson. *Egyptian Hall*, 84-100 Union Street, Glasgow, Scotland, 1872. Photo by Phil Sayer. From Gavin Stamp, *Alexander 'Greek' Thomson*, (London: Laurence King Publishing in association with Glasgow 1999 Festival Company Ltd., 1999).



Figure 32. George Audsley. *Wanamaker Pipe Organ*, created for the Los Angeles Art Organ Company, exhibited in the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Installed inside the former Wanamaker Building now, Macy's Department Store. Photo Courtesy of the Friends of the John Wanamaker Organ.



Figure 33. Detail, Title Page, *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*. 1892. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library Special Collections and Archives.

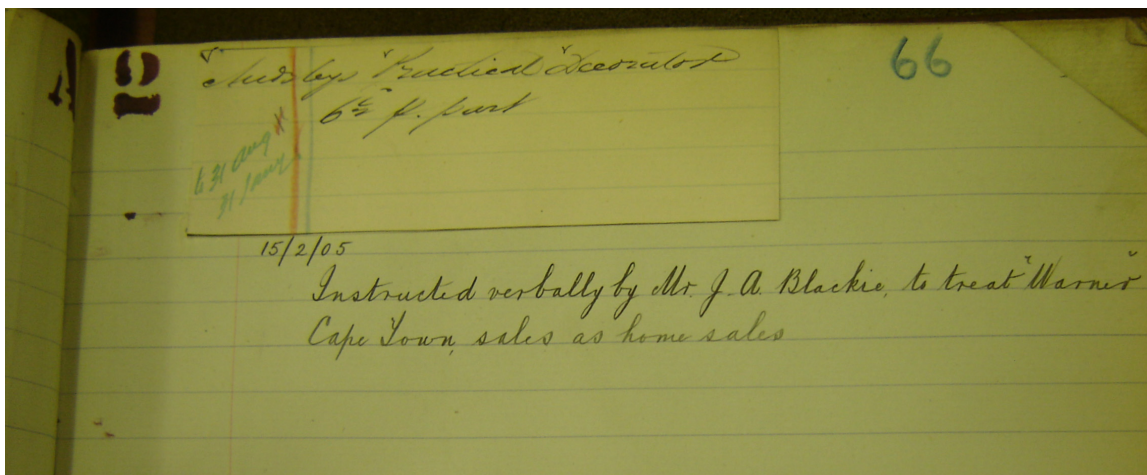


Figure 34. Written note, Author's Agreements Vol. 1, 1893-1900, Blackie & Son Ltd. Papers, Item Ref. (6.1.1). Courtesy of Glasgow University Archives.



Figure 35. Detail, Blackie & Son Logo printed in the title page of *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, 1869. Published by Blackie & Son, London, 1869. Photo by Gay Acompañado, archivist, Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library.

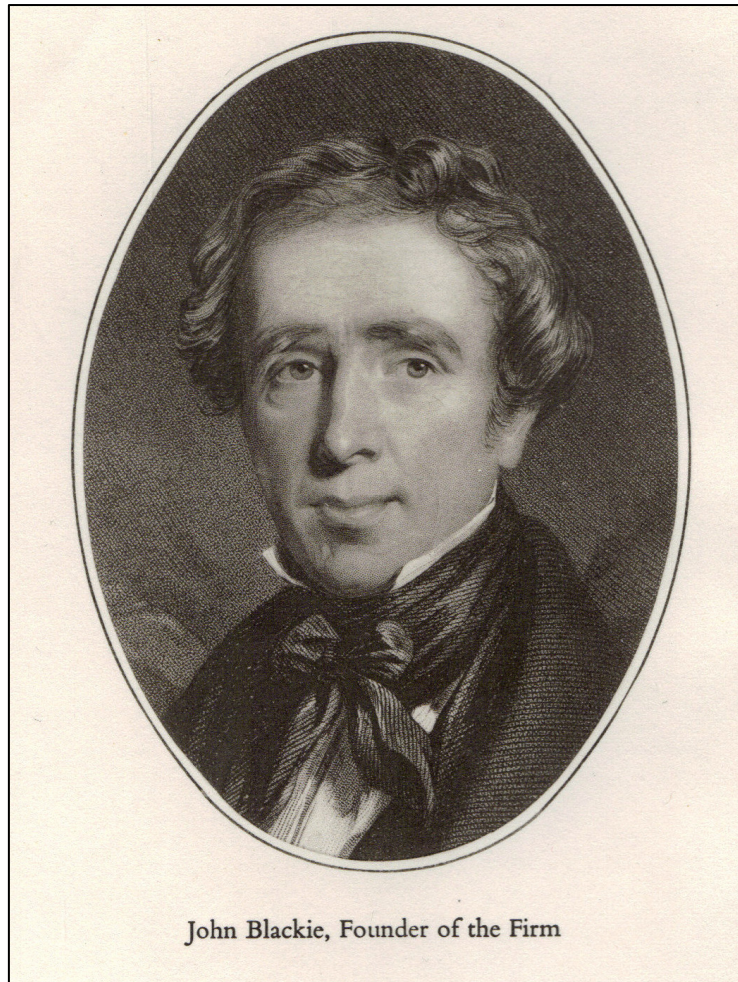


Figure 36. John Blackie Sr. (1782-1874). From Agnes A. C. Blackie, *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959).

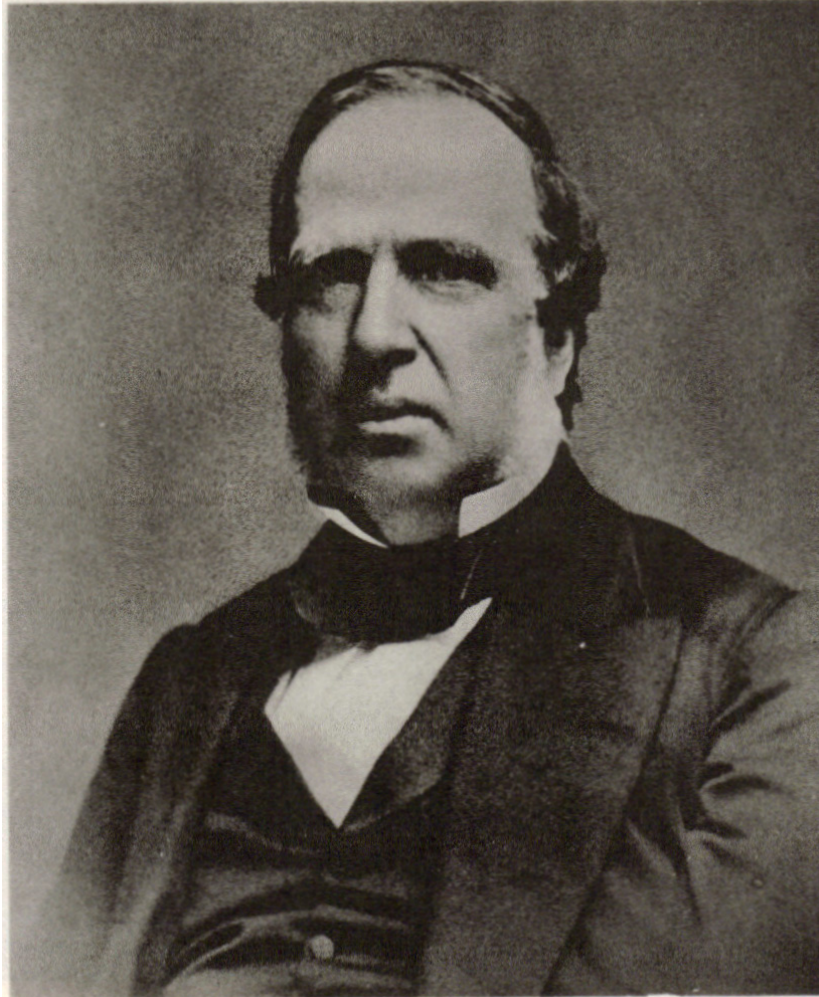


Figure 37. John Blackie Jr., (1805-1873). From Agnes A. C. Blackie, *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959).

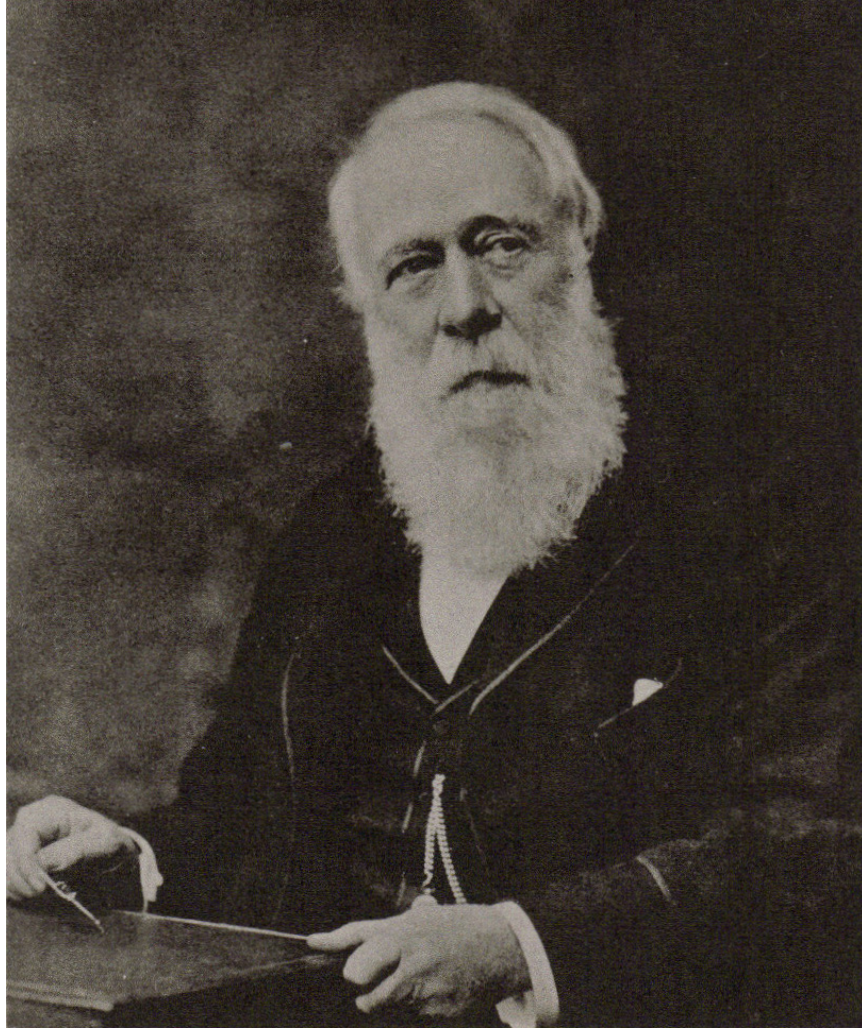


Figure 38. Walter Graham Blackie, (1816-1906). From Agnes A. C. Blackie, *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959).

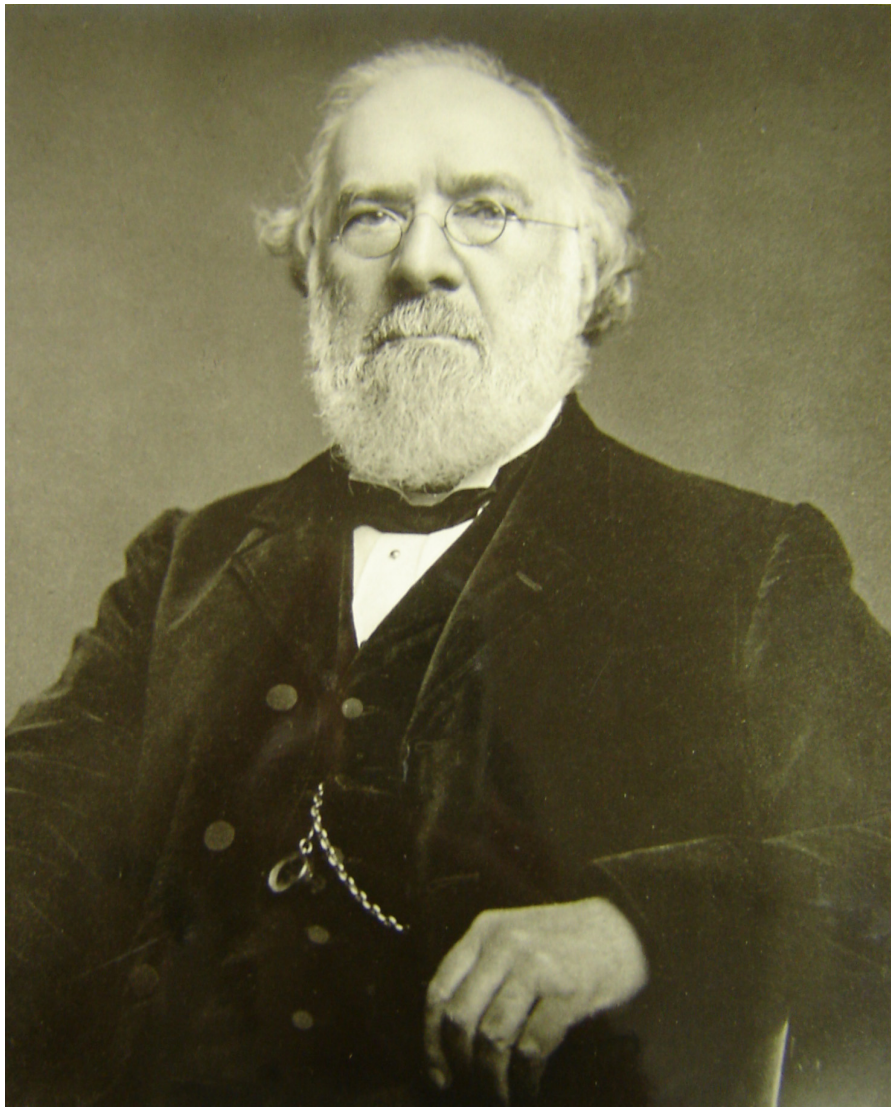


Figure 39. Robert Blackie, (1820-1896). From Agnes A. C. Blackie, *Blackie & Son (1809-1959): A Short History of the Firm*. (London, Blackie & Son Ltd., 1959).

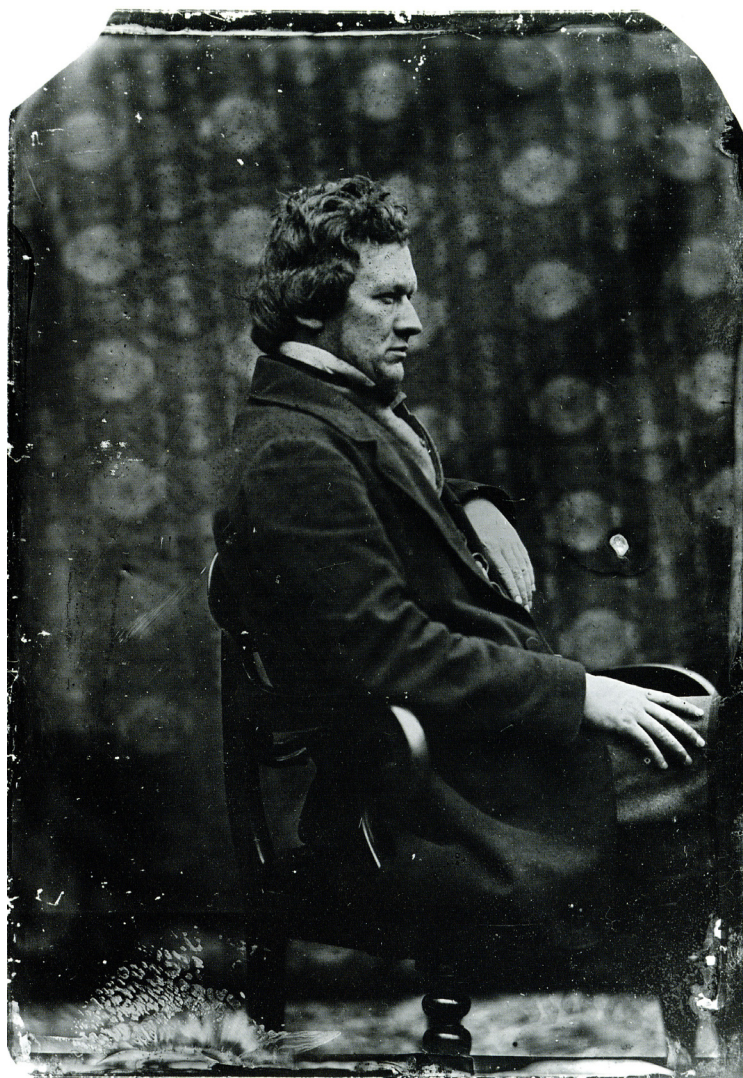


Figure 40. Daguerreotype Portrait, Alexander Thomson, 1850s. From Gavin Stamp, *Alexander 'Greek' Thomson* (London: Laurence King Publishing in association with Glasgow 1999 Festival Company Ltd., 1999).

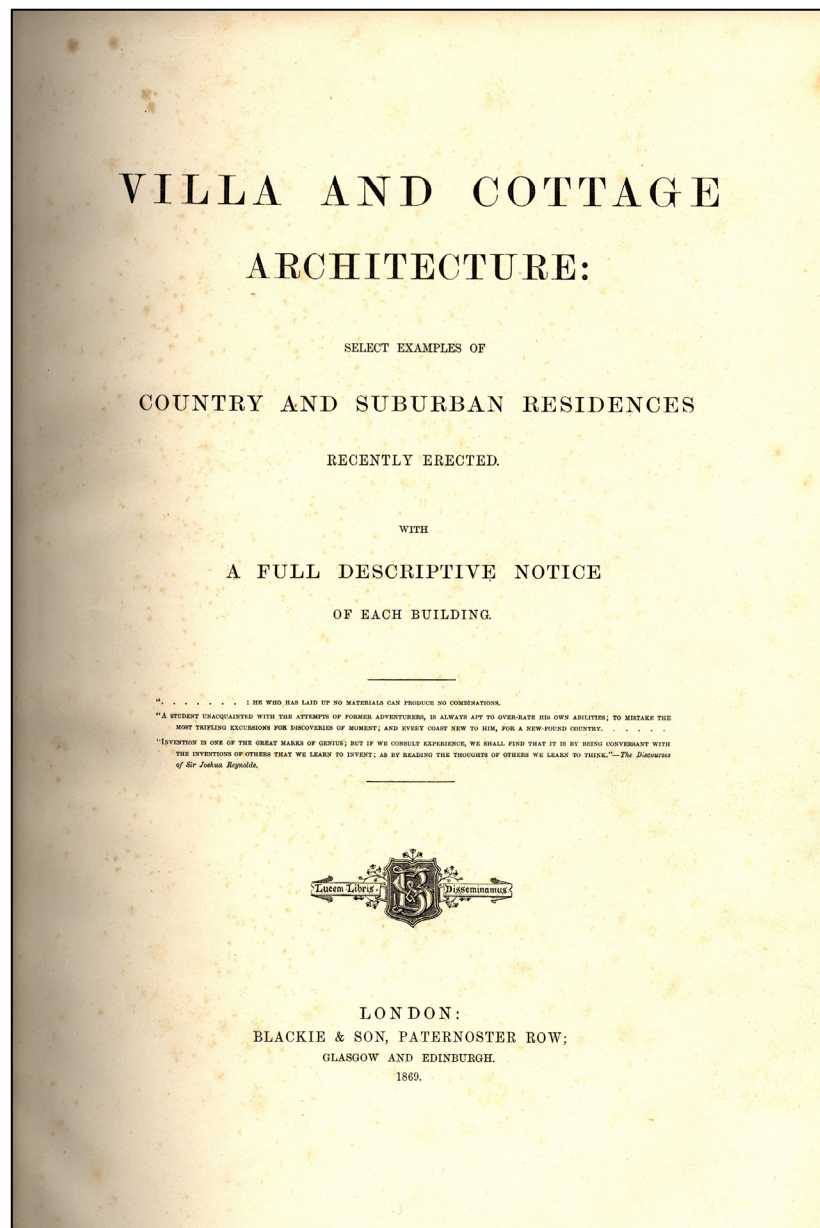


Figure 41. Title Page, *Villa and Cottage Architecture*. Published by Blackie & Son, London, 1869. Photo by Gay Acompañado, archivist, Special Collections and Archives, James Cabell Branch Library.



Figure 42. Pl. 66, Design for Holmwood by Alexander Thomson, *Villa and Cottage Architecture*. Published by Blackie & Son, London, 1869. Photo by Gay Acompañado, archivist, Special Collections and Archives, James Cabell Branch Library.



Figure 43. Alexander Thomson. *Great Western Terrace*, 1867-1877. Photo by Phil Sayer. From Gavin Stamp, *Alexander 'Greek' Thomson* (London: Laurence King Publishing in association with Glasgow 1999 Festival Company Ltd., 1999).



Figure 44. Alexander Thomson. No. 7 Great Western Terrace, façade, 1870s.
Unpublished photo by Gay Acompañado, July 2006.

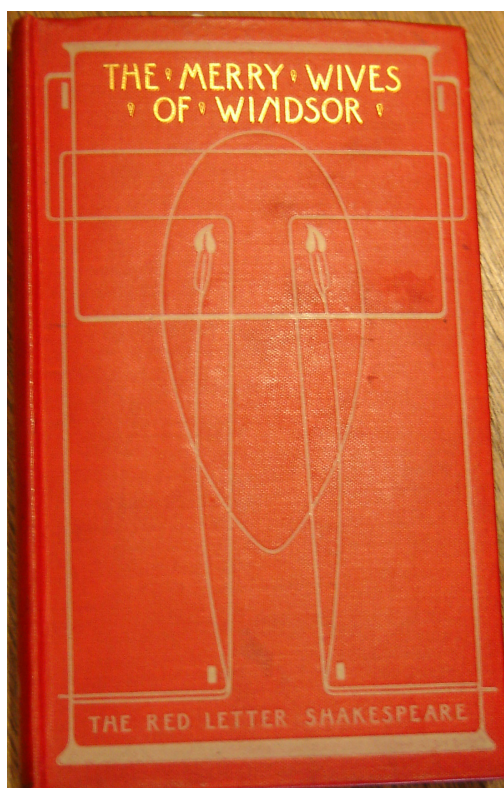


Figure 45. Talwin Morris. Red Letter of Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 1905. From the Collection of Talwin Morris designed bindings, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Library. Photo by Gay Acompañado.

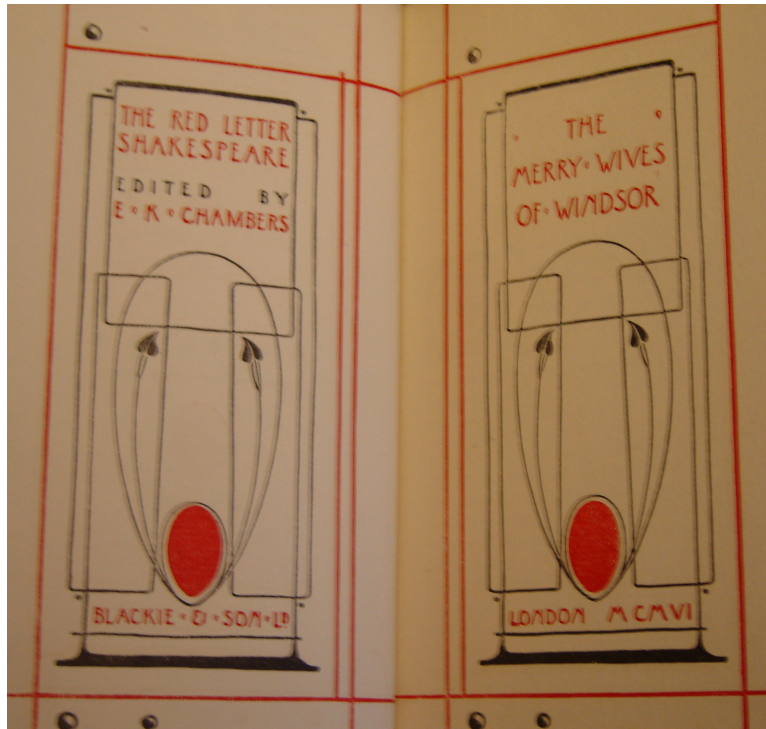


Figure 46. Title Page, Red Letter of Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 1905. Collection of Talwin Morris designed bindings, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Library. Photo by Gay Acompañado.

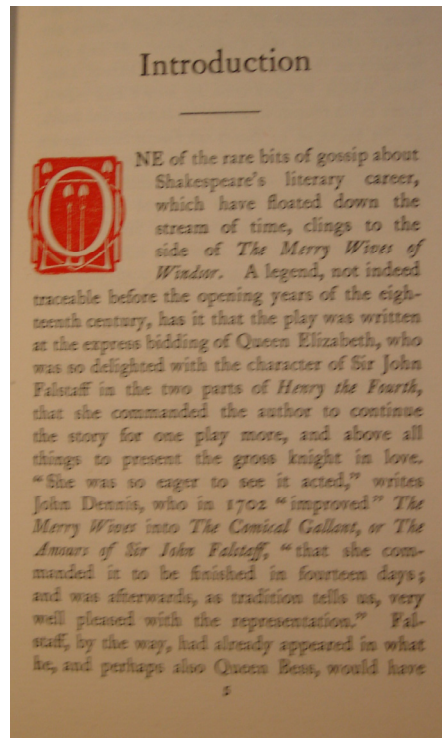


Figure 47. Introduction, Red Letter of Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 1905. Collection of Talwin Morris designed bindings, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Library. Photo by Gay Acompañado.



Figure 48. Talwin Morris. *Blackie Monument*, Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, July 2006.



Figure 49. Talwin Morris. *Blackie Monument*, detail, Necropolis Cemetery, Glasgow, Scotland. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, July 2006.



Figure 50. T. R. Annan, photograph, Charles Rennie Mackintosh as artist, 1893. From Alan Crawford, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995).



Figure 51. Charles Rennie Mackintosh. *Hill House*, designed for W. W. Blackie, 1904.
Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, July 2006.



Figure 52. Hilary Strain, *Walter Wilfred Blackie*, portrait painting, 1928. From The National Trust of Scotland. *The Hill House* (Scotland: The National Trust of Scotland, 1999).



Figure 53. Douglas MacGregor, Interior photo, 1999, *Hill House*, 1904. From The National Trust of Scotland. *The Hill House* (Scotland: The National Trust of Scotland, 1999).



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Figure 57. Drawing Room, Interior, *Hill House*, 1904. From The National Trust of Scotland. *The Hill House* (Scotland: The National Trust of Scotland, 1999).

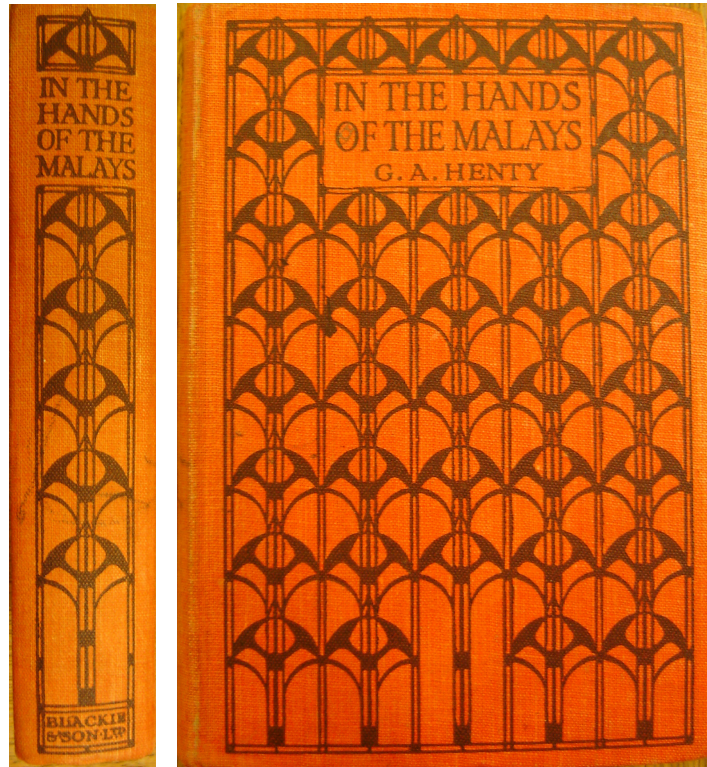


Figure 58. Mackintosh-Designed Binding for Blackie & Son. G. A. Henty. *In the Hands of the Malays*. Courtesy of the Friends of the Richmond Public Library's Children's Book Collection

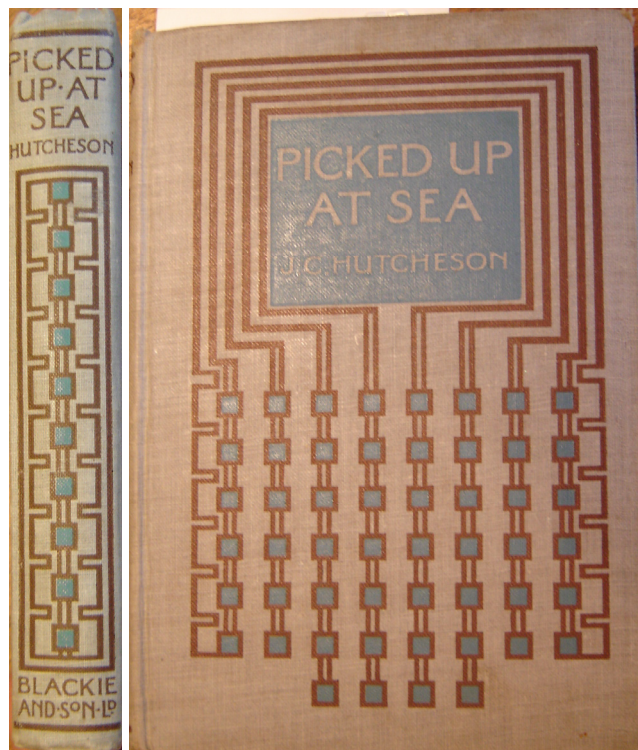


Figure 59. Mackintosh-Designed Bindings for Blackie & Son. J. C. Hutcheson. *Picked Up at Sea*. Courtesy of the VMFA Library

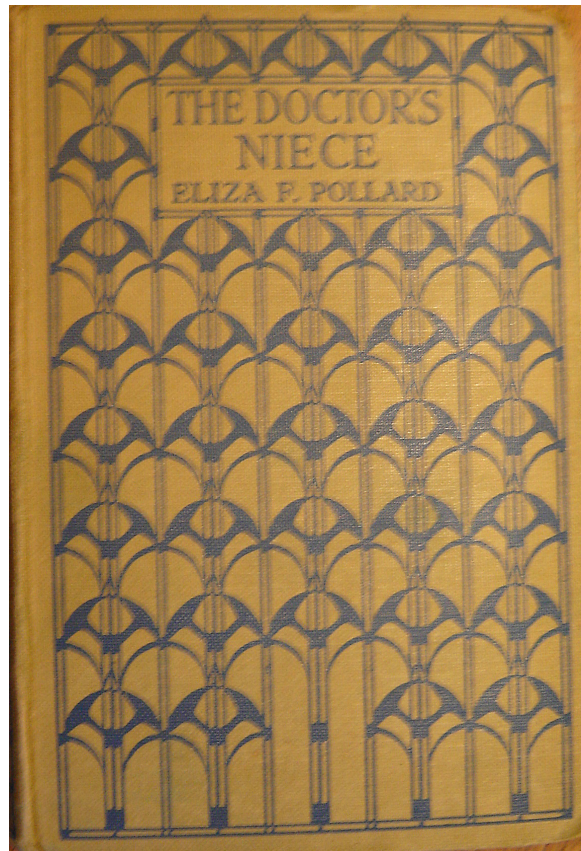


Figure 60. Mackintosh-Designed Binding for Blackie & Son. Eliza P. Pollard. *The Doctor's Niece*. Courtesy of the VMFA Library

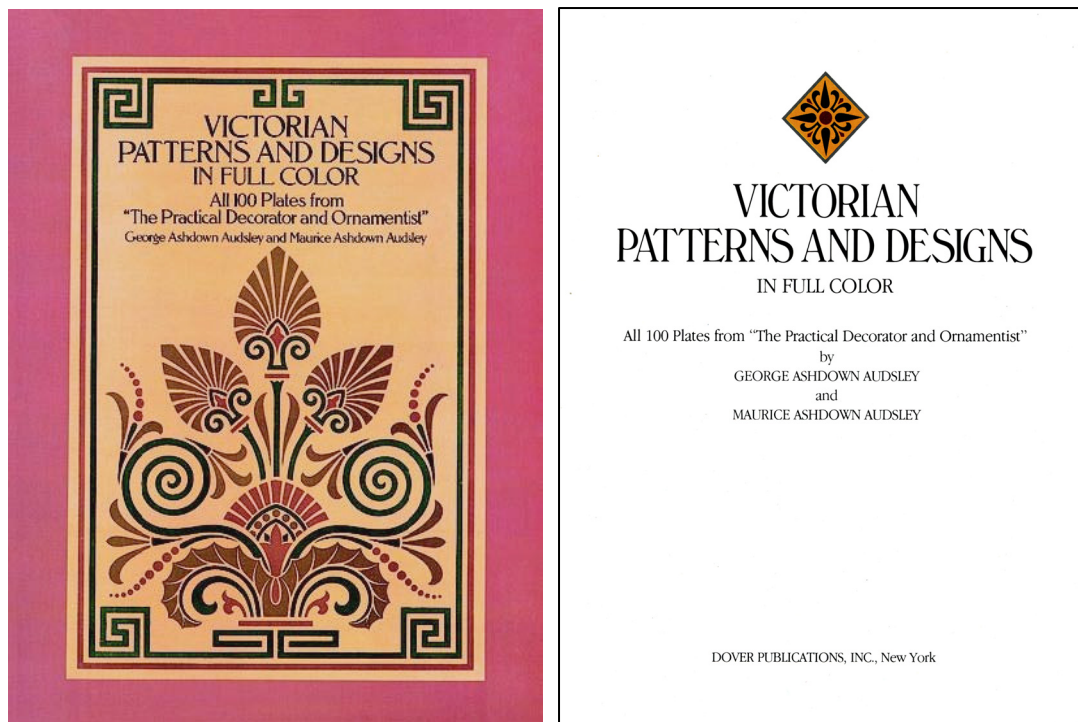


Figure 61. Cover and Title Page, *Victorian Patterns and Designs in Full Color*. Published by Dover Publications, New York, 1988.

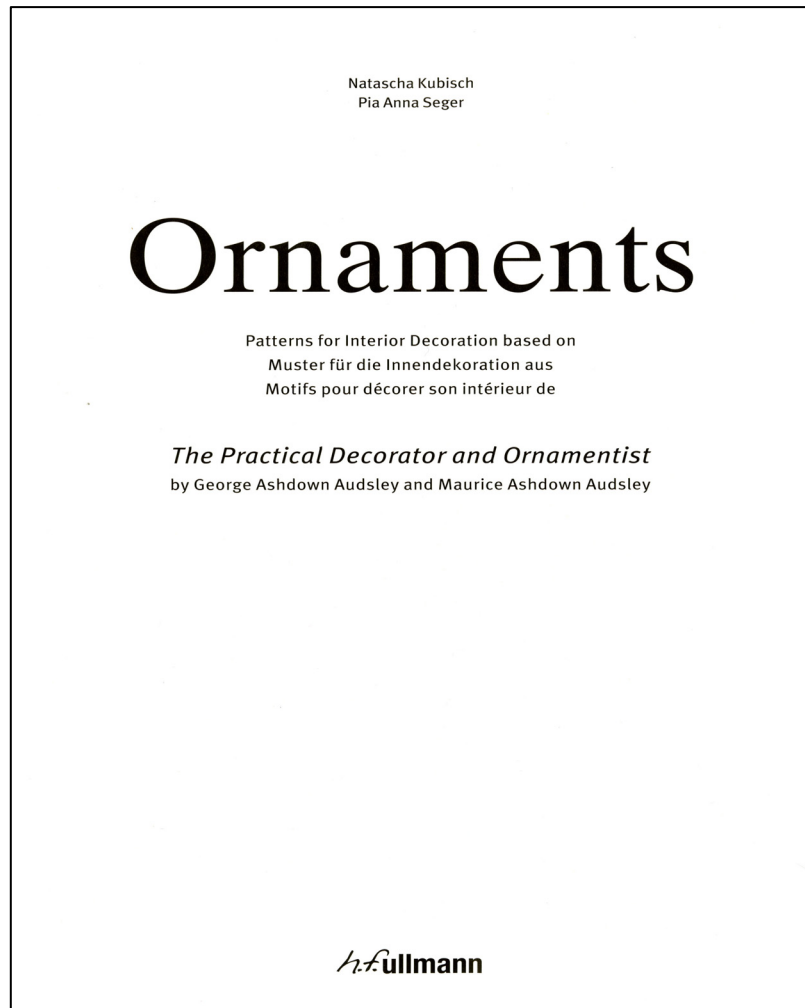


Figure 62. Cover and Title Page, Natascha Kubisch and Pia Anna Seger, *Ornaments: patterns for interior decoration based on...the practical decorator and ornamentist* by George Ashdown Audsley and Maurice Ashdown Audsley. First published by Könemann, Köln, 2001 and Reprint, Published by H.F. Ullman, Berlin, 2007.

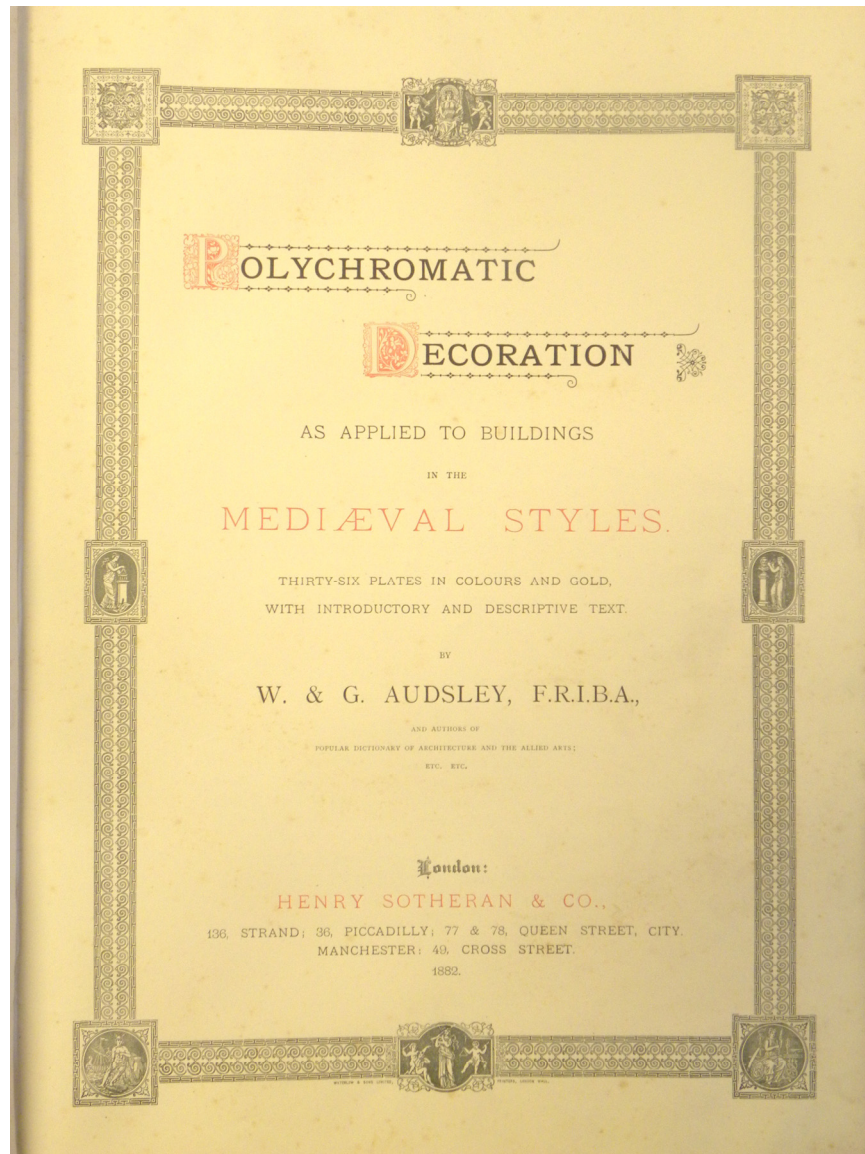


Figure 63. Title Page, William Audsley and George Audsley, *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediæval Styles*. Published by Henry Sotheran & Co, London, 1882. Photo by Gay Acompañado, Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library.

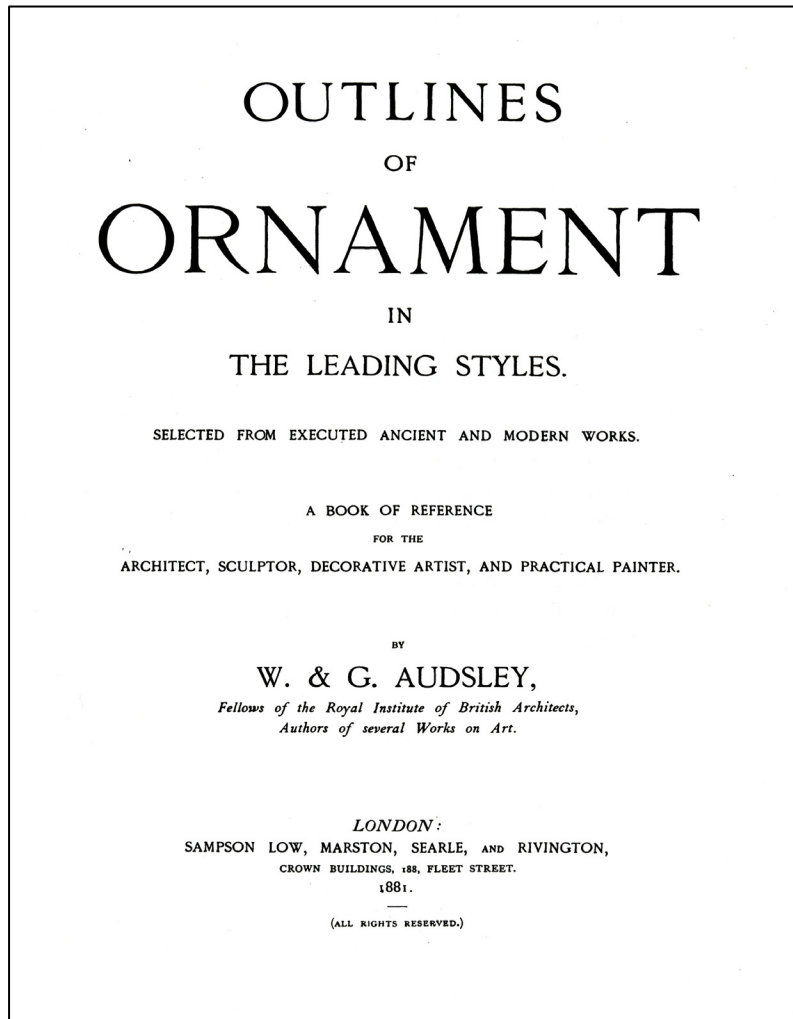


Figure 64. Title Page, William Audsley and George Audsley, *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles*. Published by Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, London, 1881.

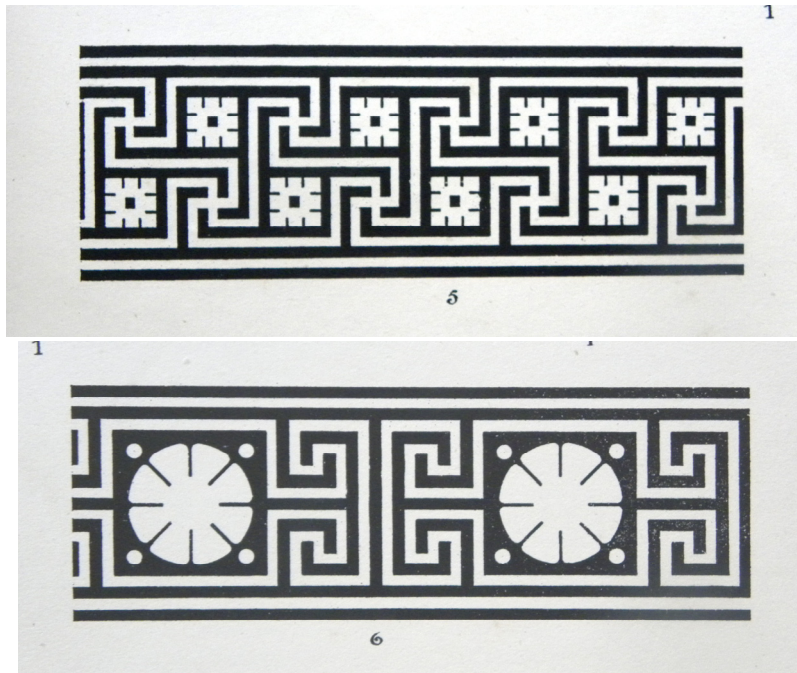


Figure 65. Detail, designs 5 and 6 in Fret Ornament, Egyptian and Classical. *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881). Photo by Gay Acompañado.



Figure 66. Details, Pl. 3 design (top) Greek ornament, Broad horizontal bands, and Pl. 2 design (bottom) Greek ornament, Fret bands and borders. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892).
 Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

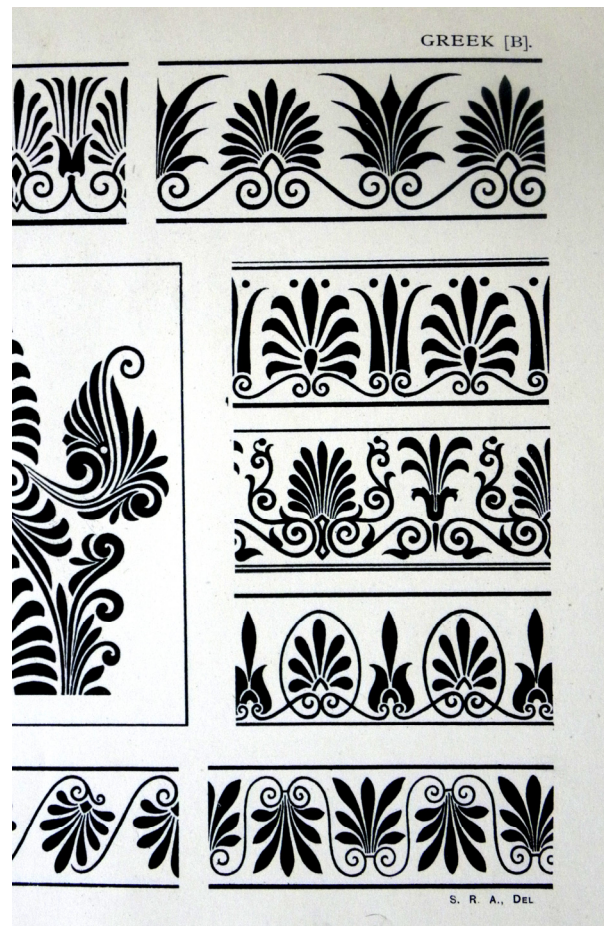


Figure 67. Detail, right side, plate of Conventional Foliage, Greek [B]. *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881). Photo by Gay Acompañado.



Figure 68. Pl. 4, Greek ornament, Horizontal bands or borders. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892).
 Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 69. Pl. 19, Greek ornament, Frieze or crestring design. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist, for the use of architects, practical painters, decorators, and designers, containing one hundred plates in colours and gold* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892).
 Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 70. Detail, Design 4 Pl. 17 Bands of Elaborate Designs in Rich Colours, *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 71. Detail, Pl. 24 Neo-Grec ornament: Horizontal bands and borders. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

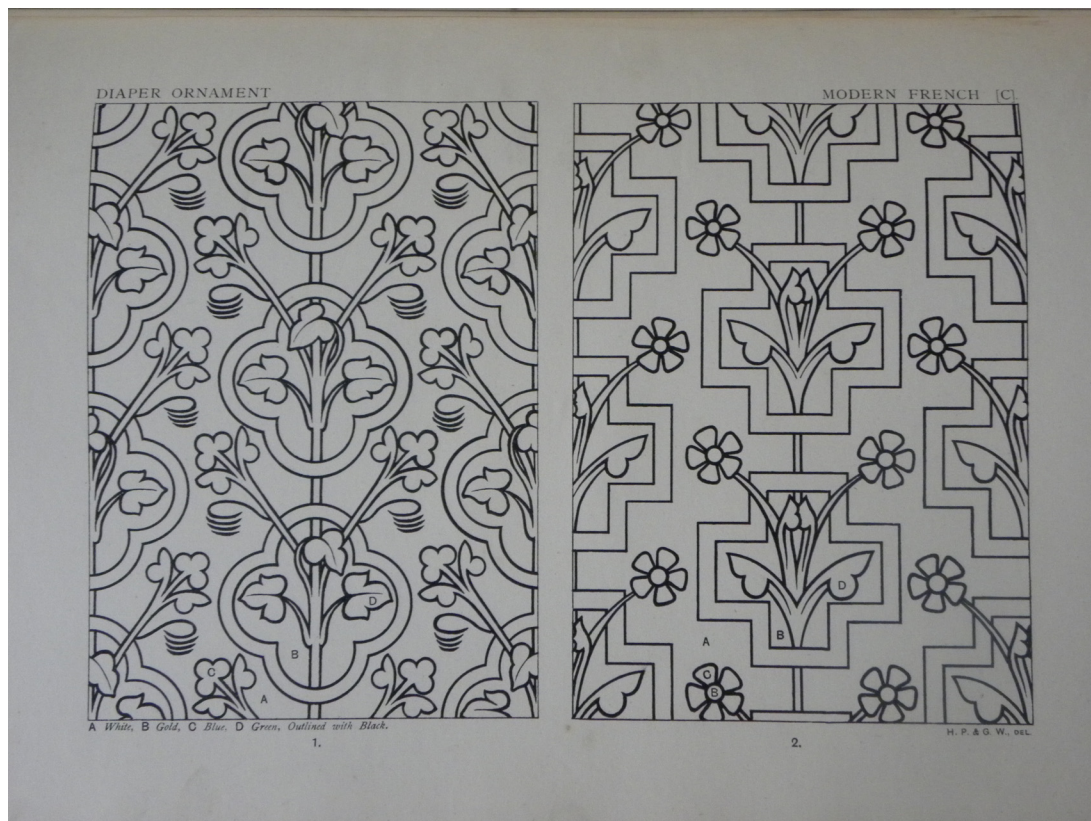


Figure 72. Designs 1 (left) and 2 (right) from *Diaper Ornament, Modern French [C]*. *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881). Photo by Gay Acompañado.



Figure 73. Pl. 50, Medieval Ornament, Designs for column and wall decorations. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 74. Detail, designs 1 (left) and 3 (right) from Pl. 12, Diaper Patterns in Rich Colours on Light Grounds, for Wall Spaces of Moderate Dimensions. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 75. Pl. 53, Medieval Ornament, Diaper patterns for vertical surfaces, *Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 76. Detail, designs 2, 3, and 4 (top to bottom), Pl. 18, Bands of Elaborate Designs in Rich Colours. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 77. Pl. 40, Medieval Ornament, Elaborate bands or borders. *Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 78. Pl. 68, Renaissance ornament, Masonry or brick pattern for vertical surfaces. *Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

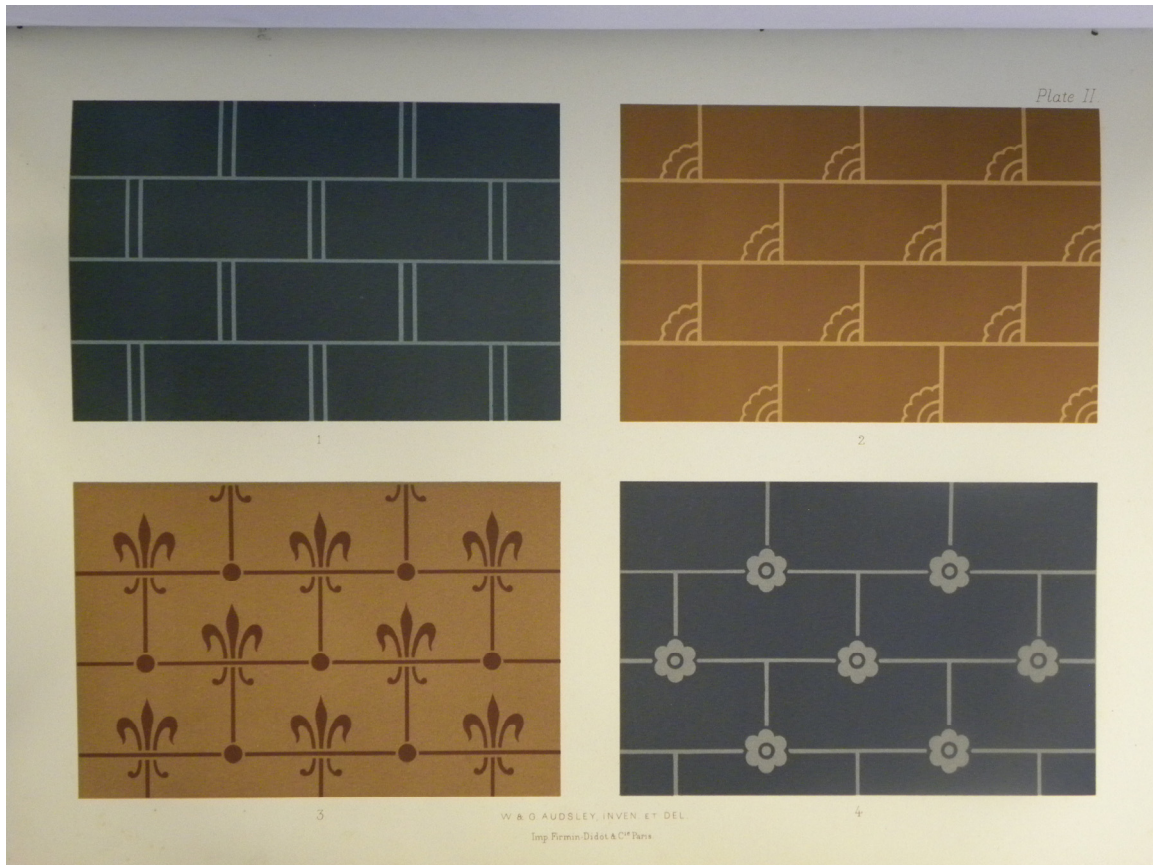


Figure 79. Pl. 2, Patterns in Dark Colours, Suitable for the Lower Portions of Walls. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

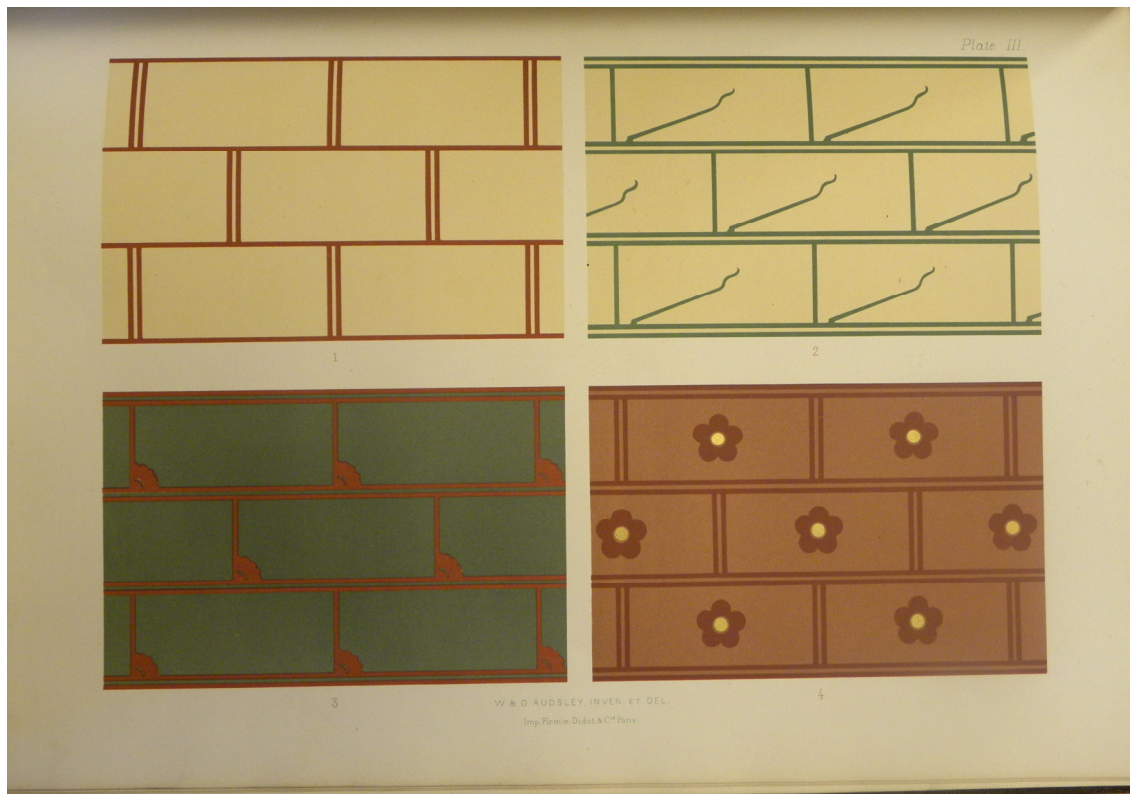


Figure 80. Pl. 3, Patterns of Light and Dark Grounds for the Upper and Lower Portions of Walls. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 81. Pl. 4, Elaborate Patterns for Walls, in Rich Colours Upon Light Grounds. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 82. Pl. 5, Elaborate Patterns for the Lower Portions of Walls, Executed in Rich Colours on Light Grounds. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 83. Pl. 75, Japanese ornament, Characteristic powdering of overlapping medallions. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

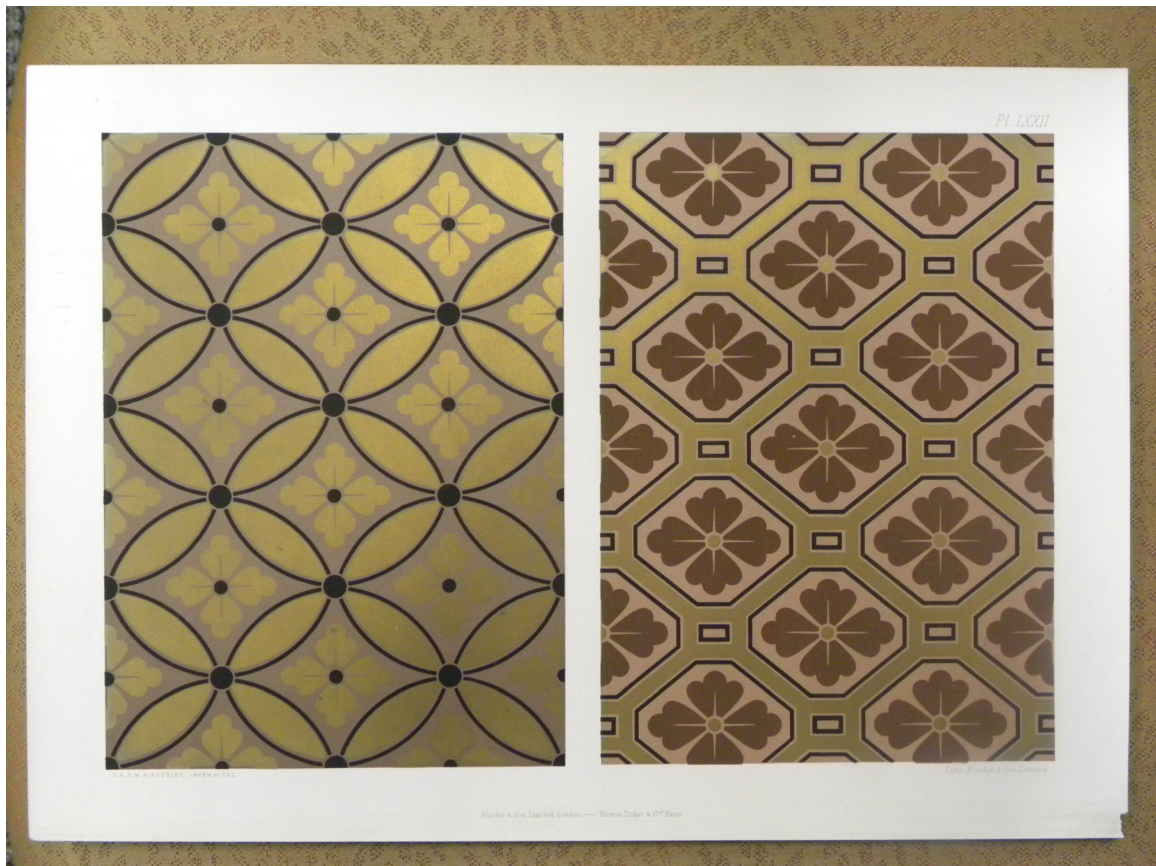


Figure 84. Pl. 72, Japanese ornament, Diaper patterns for flat or curved surfaces. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

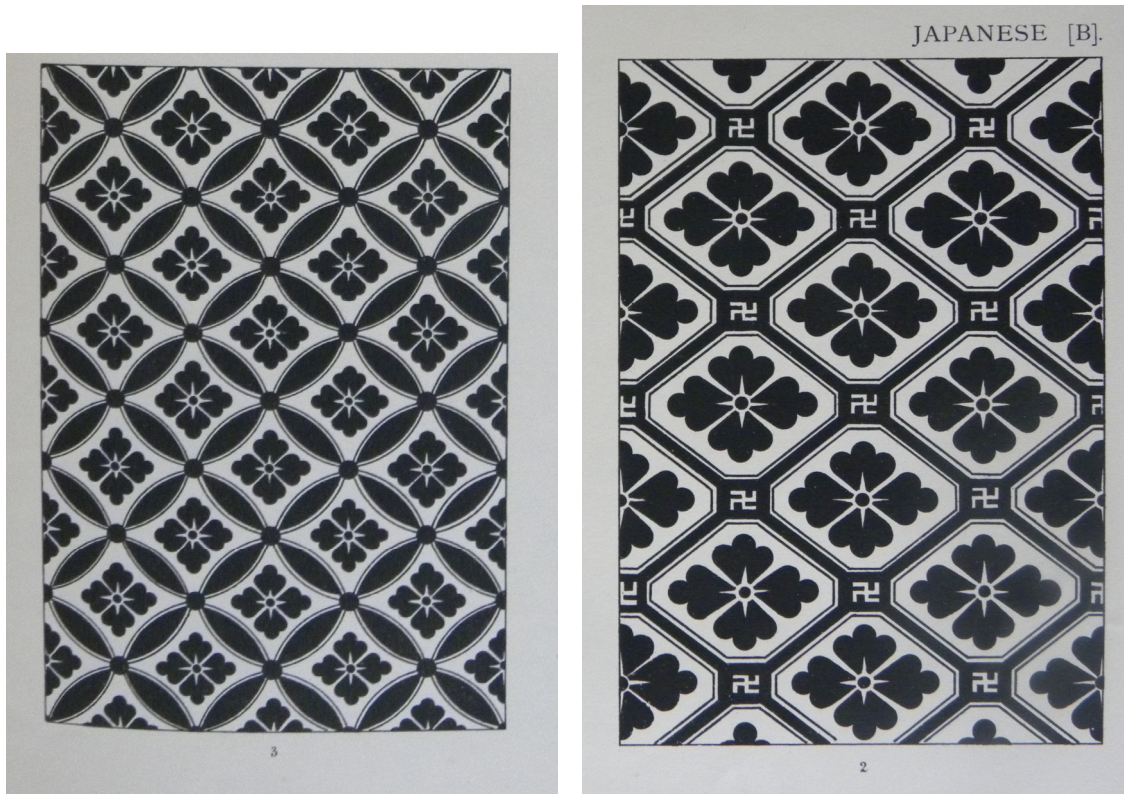


Figure 85. Designs 3 (left) and 2 (right) of Diaper Ornament, Japanese [B]. *Outlines of Ornament in the Leading Styles* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1881). Photo by Gay Acompañado.



Figure 86. Pl. 84, Conventional floral ornament, Crestings of conventionalized flowers. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 87. Pl. 85, Conventional floral ornament: Vertical surface decoration. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 88. Pl. 36, Neo-Grec ornament, Designs for Wall Decorations. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 89. Pl. 90 Miscellaneous ornament, Bands and borders of interlaced ornament. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 91. Detail, (top three designs) Pl. 100, Miscellaneous ornament, Battlemented crestings in Gothic styles. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

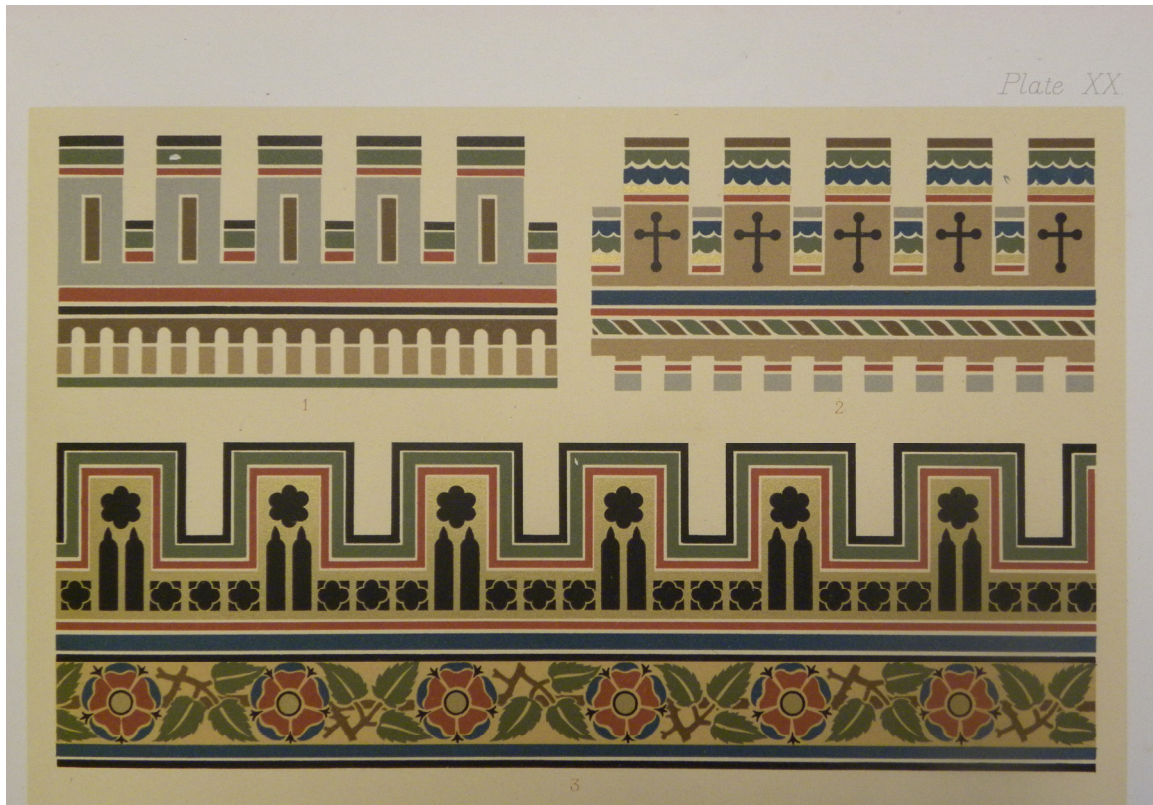


Figure 92. Detail, Designs 1, 2, and 3, Pl. 20, Battlemented Crestings, for Upper Divisions of Decorated Wall Surfaces. *Polychromatic Decoration as Applied to Buildings in the Mediaeval Styles* (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1882) Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 93. Pl. 18 (top), Greek ornament, Frieze or cresting design, and Pl. 20 (bottom), Greek ornament, Masonry or brick pattern for vertical surfaces. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 94. Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpaper. *Neo-Grec Roomset*. From Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers. Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers 1998 Catalogue and Price list (Benicia, CA: Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers, 1998) Photo by Ron Mitchell.



Figure 95. NG-5, Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpaper. Neo-Grec Wallpapers Selections.
From Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers. Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers 1998
Catalogue and Price list (Benicia, CA: Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers, 1998).

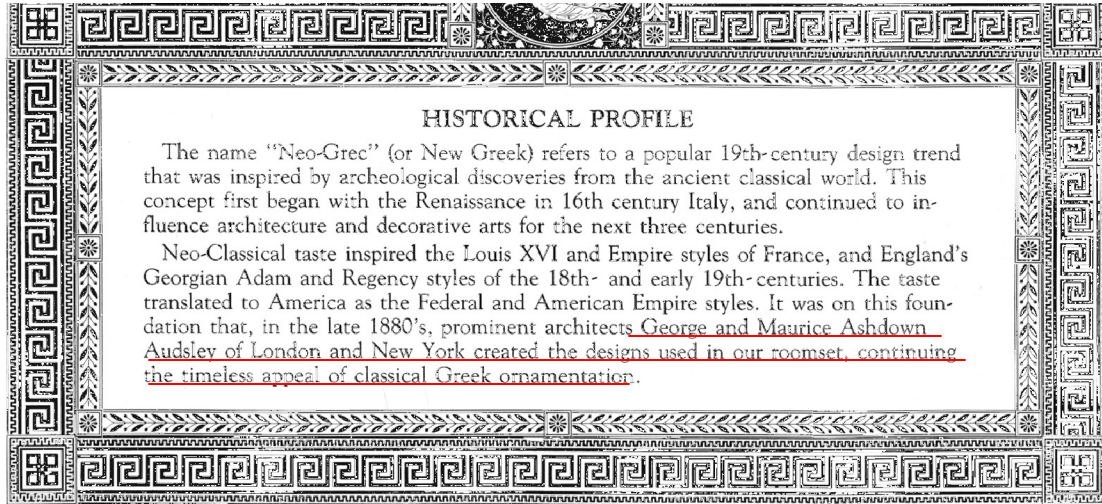


Figure 96. Detail, NG-1, Neo-Grec Roomset Introductory Page recognizing the Audsleys. From Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers. Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers 1998 Catalogue and Price list (Benicia, CA: Bradbury & Bradbury Wallpapers, 1998).



Figure 97. Dudley Brown. Detail, Wall of 1915 redesigned auditorium, Bolling Haxall House, Richmond, Virginia. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, January 2008.

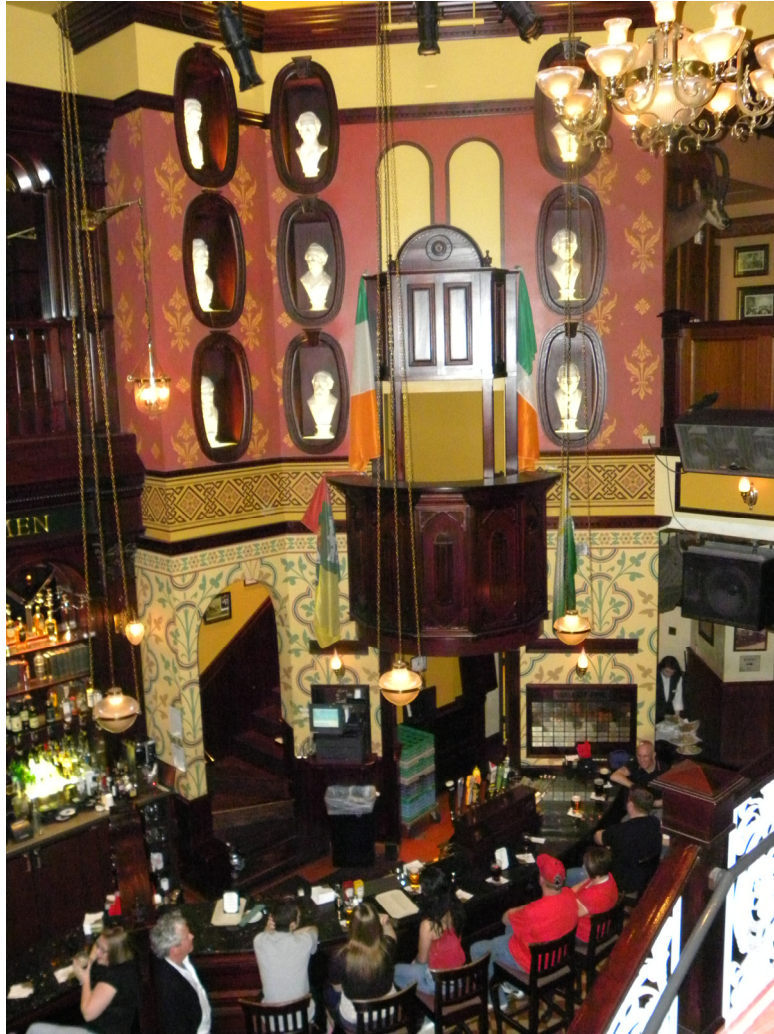


Figure 98. Irish Pub Company. Interior, Nine Fine Irishmen Pub, New York, New York Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, late 1990s. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, March 2010.



Figure 99c. Detail, Pl. 58 Medieval ornament, Decorations for Rafters and Beams. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 99a. Irish Pub Company. Interior detail, Wall decoration, Nine Fine Irishmen Pub, late 1990s. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, March 2010.



Figure 99b. Detail, Pl. 50 Medieval ornament, Designs for Column and Wall Decorations. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist*, (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 100. Detail, Pl. 92, Miscellaneous ornament, Powderings for vertical surfaces. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.



Figure 101. Interior detail, Nine Fine Irishmen Pub, New York New York Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, Late 1990s. Unpublished Photo by Gay Acompañado, March 2010.



Figure 102. Pl. 91, Miscellaneous ornament, Vertical bands or soffit decorations of interlaced ornament. *The Practical Decorator and Ornamentist* (Glasgow, Blackie & Son, 1892). Photo by Gay Acompañado. Courtesy of James Branch Cabell Library, Special Collections and Archives.

Vita

Gay Petalio Acompañado was born on April 15, 1984, in Nabua, Camarines Sur, Philippines. She is a naturalized American citizen. She graduated from the International Baccalaureate Program at Granby High School, Norfolk, Virginia in 2003. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia in 2006. In the summer of 2006, she participated in VCU's study abroad program, Glasgow Artist and Writers' Workshop held in Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland. With a scholarship she received from the Victorian Society in America, she attended the Victorian Society Summer School in Newport, Rhode Island in the summer of 2009. She presented papers at VCU's Annual Symposium for Architectural History and Decorative Arts. She is currently the archival assistant for the arts and the curator of the Book Art Collection at Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library, in Richmond, Virginia.